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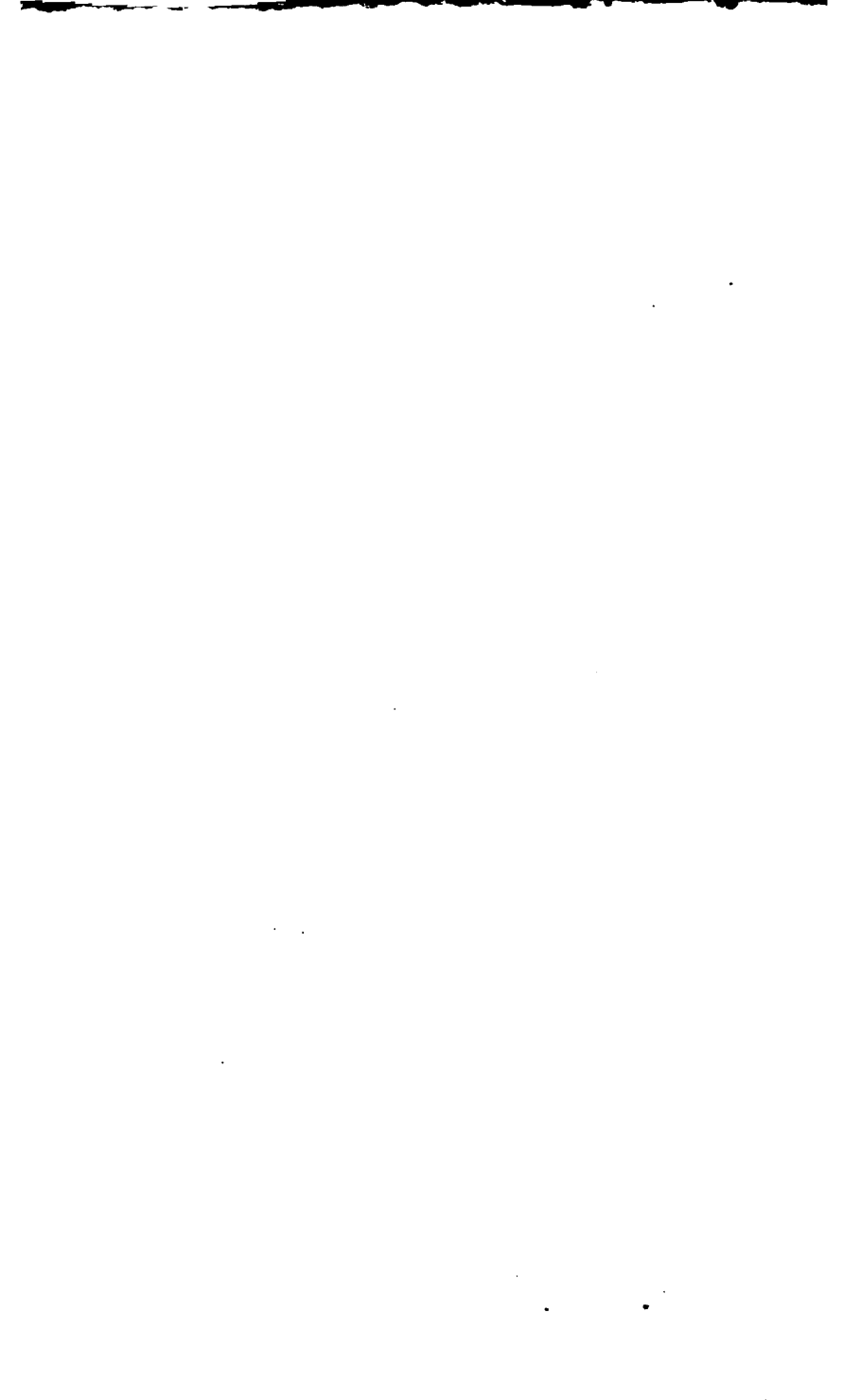
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COURTSHIP AND WEDLOCK;

OR,

LOVERS AND HUSBANDS.

A Nobel

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'COUSIN GEOFFREY,' 'THE JILT,'
'THE MARRYING-MAN,' 'THE LIFE OF A BEAUTY,'
'THE WARNING TO WIVES,' &c., &c., &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

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COURTSHIP AND WEDLOCK;

OR,

LOVERS AND HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW.

LADY BEAUCHAMP, like all very clever people, had the power of making herself extremely agreeable when she wished to conciliate, and eminently detestable when her object was to annoy.

In the present instance, for some reason or other, doubtless, (for she never did anything without a reason), she assumed a frankness, a

laissez-aller, and an affectionate cordiality perfectly bewitching to strangers, and which was so admirably assumed, as to cheat even those who knew her but too well, into the idea that she was an altered being!—as if a wily coquettish worldling of fifty ever did alter, or as if any full grown human creature was ever known to change, except, indeed, under the purifying, the hallowing, the ennobling influence of that spirit which can wash away all stains, however deep their dye, restore the first whiteness of the soul—and fill with a new, a simple, and a Christian heart, even the vain bosom of an elderly coquette.

This spirit, Lady Beauchamp did not even affect to possess at the present moment, more than through all her antecedent career of interested and ambitious vanity! Of course had she been questioned on the subject, she would have proclaimed herself A CHRISTIAN! and because she had been baptised in that faith, she would have professed herself a member of

that purest and most unworldly branch of the Christian religion, the holy Protestant Church! but her protest against the sins and vanities of this wicked world, was made from the most softly cushioned and conspicuous pew of the most fashionable church in town during its season, or that of the most modish watering-places during theirs! It flowed over carefully tinted lips!—and was read from a gemmed and gilded “Church Service” in which, (the golden and jewelled clasp undone)—the first record that met the eye in the book of *truth*, was the false name of “Eleanor Beauchamp”, and a miniature and highly finished coat of arms!—blazoned as if in defiance of the meek confession of “being by nature born of *sin*, and the child of wrath”,—and as if the tracing a vain and wicked race back to a dissolute Norman Robber, a barbarous Saxon, or an idolatrous Dane—could do away with the simple pedigree that takes us all back “To Gardener Adam and to Housewife Eve”.

The young easily believe, that what *seem* to be, *is*, and so Rosalie and Jeannetta, though the former had much shrewd common sense, and the latter, with the egotism of love, had been at first very impatient of any intrusion on her intercourse with her Gonzalve, were won over to believe, that the great matches her own daughters had made, had set her heart and mind at rest on their account, and when she smiled and said :

“ While Louisa and Augusta were single, my sweet nieces ! I was a little jealous of charms which I felt might eclipse theirs—but now that each has won her coronet—I should feel with Othello my occupation gone, if I had not two beauties still *à marier*, and who, perhaps, unlike my own thankless girls, may not quite forget me, even in all the bustling vanity and egotistical importance of a new and grand establishment—(‘ Jeannetta,’ she would say, ‘ has brought down her Earl ’) without any help of mine ; but Rosalie, who scorns a Baron, must

commission aunty to look her out some young, handsome, wealthy British peer, that we may see whom the coronet and ermine most become ; my Louisa, or my Rosalie !”

“ Ah, dear aunt,” said Rosalie, playfully embracing her, “ give yourself no trouble in tuft-hunting on my account—Along the cool sequestered vale of life,

“ ‘ I’ll keep the noiseless tenor of my way.’

Leave coronets and ermine to stately, dark-eyed, black-browed beauties like Jeannetta, Louisa, and Augusta—I have no height to carry off velvet trains and ermined robes—gems were lost in my light hair—a muslin dress and a wreath of wild flowers for me—My favourite singers are the nightingale and thrush, the linnet, and the lark—the concerts I love best, I can listen to from some sweet jasmine bower, lighted by the silver moon, and the cool evening breeze laden with the breath of every sweetest

flower fanning my cheek, and waving my hair. Those are the concerts for me !”

“ And yet,” said Jeannetta, “ you very nearly fainted, Miss Rosalie, with delight and excitement when first you heard Jenny Lind.”

“ Capital !” said the aunt. “ How do you explain that, sweet niece.”

“ Why many fainted on that same occasion,” said Rosalie, “ but not from so romantic a cause ; I believe the intense heat, the unspeakable crush, the clamour, the uproar, all might account for the swoon of a mere country girl — although I do own, that for the sake of the sweet nightingale of the North even *I* can bear with patience to be pushed and jostled, crushed, and elbowed, by a dense mob of the *well-born* and the *ill-bred*, to breathe an air that seems to scorch the lungs, and which, if analysed by Faraday, I do believe would be pronounced a memphitic acid gas, akin to poison — to be stunned by the rapturous, clamorous applause of those by nature and habit *non-chalants*, scornful and *blasé*, and whom Jenny

Lind alone has power to persuade they are not quite 'used up!' For her sweet sake, even I can bear all this; but for nothing less than Jenny Lind would I willingly exchange the concerts of the 'Season in the Country' for those of the 'Season in Town'; but the nightingale of the North is they say caught in rosy bonds, and caged in a golden cage—and Love, the great monopolist, is alone henceforth to know what music can be, and how much the song of a daughter of earth, can be like what we fancy might be that of an angel in Heaven!"

"There, aunt," said Jeannetta, "you would not expect that from such a quiet, demure little rustic, as Rosalie seems—you will awaken no worldly ambition in her, believe me—she might fall in love with a poet, but never, I believe, with a peer"

"No," laughed Rosalie, "a title has no charm for me."

"Except a title to orders," slyly suggested Lady Beauchamp.

Why did a deep crimson blush suffuse the fair brow, cheek, and bosom of Rosalie! why did her ready wit forsake her, her form tremble, her lip quiver, and her eyes fill with tears?

Lady Beauchamp read in that emotion, the secret of her heart, and the story of her life, but, with matchless tact, she appeared to see nothing but a gay sail, shining in the sun, and swelling in the breeze—and Jeannetta, while her aunt spoke, had recognized her lover's step on the stairs—and engrossed by her own emotion, what was Rosalie's to her? Jeannetta was a fond sister—but all lovers are egotists.

CHAPTER II.

THE BALL.

THE grand ball, given by the Honourable Colonel Pevensey and the officers of his regiment, filled the empty heads and hollow hearts, of almost every beau and belle invited, (or uninvited,) to figure away on the chalked floors of the —— Rooms. Ladies seemed to think it a foretaste of Paradise, to be allowed, with waists laced in to agony, and feet

squeezed up to torture, to pant in unpaid finery ...over-dressed and over-heated...through a succession of romping polkas, *shottiches*, and *sauteuses*, with moustachiod and whiskered fops, entirely taken up with their own charms...who drawled in monosyllables, a few platitudes about the heat, the music, Jenny Lind, and the bore of this thing or that—Beaux, sick at heart, with envy of the officers' gay uniforms, exhausted their slender imaginations, and in some instances, their slender purses too, in as much finery as the “*costume bourgeois*” admits of, richly-laced ties—embroidered and jewel-studded shirts, waistcoats—of white satin, literally embossed with gold and silver, glittering chains, rings, and shirt-pins! every thing that could be done, was done—and done as usual, in vain—nothing can give elegance or splendour, taste or grace, to the costume of the gentlemen of the nineteenth century—the officers, as is always the case, first cut them out, and then ‘cut them up’ very handsome

men in plain clothes, could hardly get very ugly women to dance with them, while the plainest little officers present, were eagerly accepted by first rate beauties. Oh, what jealousies and heart-burnings were there—what disorder inside those heads so trimly curled outside—heartless girls looked coldly on their affianced lovers...if their charms had obtained a condescending glance, or a protecting smile from the proud and handsome Pevensey—a bold stare from the tall and elegant Captain Travers...a soft smile from the light and brilliant Vernon...or any kind of notice or attention, from any man in a gay uniform, and with that inexplicable martial grace and *tour-nure*, none but military men possess.

Even Gonzalve De Montfaucon, though he suffered less from the comparison, than any other "*en habit bourgeois*" at that ball...even he was deemed by none, but his adoring Jeannetta, equal in beauty to Colonel Pevensey himself, and far superior to any other man present.

He who in a similar, or, indeed, in any uniform, would have won all the frivolous hearts at that ball, was scarcely deemed worth a second look, though dressed in the perfection of quiet and gentlemanly taste.

Yes, Jeannetta herself, admitted, for the first time, the very great and noble beauty of Colonel Pevensey, and the brilliant and elegant effect of regimentals in a ball room—and then she remembered with pride, that her Gonzalve too was a soldier, and figured to herself, how he would surpass them all, in his own rich uniform.

Captain Crevecœur and the Baron de Saint Felix, generally the pets of the fair and the idols of the ball-room, were in a smothered rage, which vented itself in muttered curses among which "*Sacure and ces diables d'officiers Anglais!*" might be heard by any who took the trouble to listen.

Slighted by the younger belles, and being unable to obtain any tolerably pretty or fashion-

able partners—they devoted themselves to those who had seen officers enough to know they were but men, and sometimes vain and frivolous men too, and the Baron de Saint Felix and Captain Crevecœur, both capital dancers and desperate flirts spent the evening in “cultivating,” as Pevensey said, “two wall flowers!” Pretty clever and agreeable woman certainly, and one of them, (Mrs. Orde) thinking herself entitled to all his devotion,—the other determined, if possible, to rob her sister-in-law of what she considered a wealthy prize and valuable conquest!

Lady Beauchamp however took good care not to let her sister-in-law perceive any of the soft and furtive smiles with which she repaid the flirting Crevecœur’s sly glances of admiration! She knew that however wealthy a Frenchman may be himself, he always expects corresponding riches in the object of his choice, and had arrayed herself on this occasion quite umptuously! all the Beauchamp diamonds,

(very fine ones too,) were put in requisition, and though her neck and arms, were the neck and arms of a fashionable London chaperone, and those of Mrs. Orde were lovely as ever in their snowy embonpoint, the Captain's eyes rested much oftener on her Ladyship's, than on Mrs. Orde's, for brilliants which he knew to be of the first water sparkled on the one, and only a slight gold chain and bracelets of her daughters' hair, with their miniatures as clasps, adorned the other!

Mrs. Orde was so good humoured and unsuspecting, and Lady Beauchamp was so adroit and sly that the Captain's interested inconstancy escaped all notice, except that of the quiet but quick witted Rosalie, who perceived with pleasure, a chance of being rid of a detestable, false, foreign father-in-law, and resolved to make the most, of her aunt's possessions and expectations in the hearing of Captain Crevecœur.

As for the Baron, having been slighted by

Rosalie, who was very fond of dancing, and in great request among the officers, both for her beauty, her *naïvete* and her light and graceful manner of flying as it were through the polka and the shottiche, and gliding through the waltz and quadrilles, he affected a sort of *dépit amoureux*, and took upon himself to sulk with her the whole evening.

She was very glad of an opportunity of proving to the world in general and to himself in particular, that he was nothing to her, and that she never intended he should be anything but a hopeless adorer. Rosalie was honored several times with Colonel Pevensey's hand, a distinction which made her the envy of the choicest belles of the evening, and which she owed to his finding, to his unspeakable surprise, that Jeannetta was not at all ready to accept his half scornful attentions, but was bent on enjoying to the full, one of the most exquisite pleasures this dull life yields, a first ball with her first and only love.

Ah, those who cannot love, escape much anxiety, much anguish, much misery, but they lose the only ecstasy the heart can know, the only bliss at once bewildering and absorbing. Jeannetta alone perhaps among those hundreds of "fair women and brave men" floated through the mazes of the dance, scarcely conscious that her feet touched the earth, while her soul seemed to have soared into an ambrosial Eden. His eyes were on her blushing cheek, she knew it, she felt it, though the consciousness of too intense a happiness, made her veil her own tearful orbs beneath

"The lids whose jetty fringe
Kissed her soft cheek's blooming tinge."

His voice was in her ear, whispering words of passionate admiration and tender love. His arm was round her waist and slightly as it encircled her, it seemed to bear her from all the common cares and coarse realities of life, into some region of boundless rapture and ineffable delight.

Colonel Pevensey who was fast becoming as

much in love with Jeannetta, as such a man commonly is with any woman—could only explain her conduct by an idea, suggested by the wily Symons, that she wished to awaken jealousy, who in the human heart is ever ready to fan the flame of love...and to be revenged on her, for presuming to play off any womanly devices on his august self, Colonel Pevensey devoted himself a good deal to Rosalie.

Her freshness, her *naïveté*, and her arch sincerity amused, and (as he said to Symons,) refreshed his spirit, parched by the arid monotony of the conversation, of fashionable women—then too, though “not the rose” (the Rose of his fancy, at least;) “she had dwelt near it,” and as Rosalie admired the Colonel extremely and would gladly have seen Jeannetta united to him, instead of to the Count (a foreigner, a Roman Catholic, and to her thinking, a mysterious and very inexplicable character), she talked freely with him, about her sister, reciprocated his admiration of her beauty, extolled

her temper, her goodness, her talents, and told him many little traits of the sweet simplicity of her nature and the warm tenderness of her heart.

To these the Colonel listened with an interest, scarcely concealed by his habitual *nonchalance* and hauteur, for he was thinking of his sweet Clarissa and his darling boy, and that such a woman might perhaps be above all mean and selfish jealousies, and act as a mother to his loved and lovely children.

"Is your sister fond of children?" asked Pevensey, in a tone so indifferent that none could have guessed, that his proud heart actually trembled for Rosalie's reply.

"Oh yes—absurdly so," laughed his gay partner, "only she spoils them...she cannot bear to see them weep—not even those silly tears 'forgot as soon as shed,' I have known her stop in the street an hour, and in the rain too, to quiet with bonbons, caresses or anything she could think of, some little, wilful squaller

whose monotonous and causeless noise only irritated me, as it did every one else,...and who seeing there was something to be got by crying, yelled the louder for every bon-bon he received or espied. Oh, she dotes on children!"

"I am very glad of that," said Colonel Pevensey, almost thinking aloud.

"Why?" asked Rosalie.

"Oh!" and he half laughed, and quite blushed, "because I mean to ask your good mamma's leave to bring my little darlings to see her. It is such a great advantage to motherless children like mine to be a good deal with amiable and accomplished women."

"To be a good deal with!" thought Rosalie; "unless he means a great deal, he makes very sure of one's readiness to be troubled probably with two spoilt, conceited, aristocrats, but he is their father and I like him all the better for fancying they must be welcome," and so she said: "We shall be

delighted to see them and to show them any attention in our power!"

The Colonel seemed for a moment a little startled at the air of independence and protection, with which a mere nobody, in his estimation, spoke of the honor he intended to confer, in allowing his "little Plantagenets," to associate with her family, but he checked himself and said:—

"Have you ever seen my *Clariſſa* and my *Marmaduke*?"

"I have," replied *Rosalie* simply but (*avec intention*) "at least if a little girl and boy, who ride very pretty and very small *Shetland* ponies are yours, as I was told they were."

"Possibly they might be," said the Colonel coldly, very angry and very much amazed in his own heart, that *Rosalie* should not have expressed any of the admiration his children's beauty generally excited, or burst into the raptures most ladies did when speaking of them to him.

"Of course," continued Rosalie, "I cannot be certain about it, there are so many children and so many Shetland ponies, at Brighton now, and they all dress so much alike, and look so much alike, so wild and rosy....."

This was more than Pevensey could bear, the idea of his exquisite, high-born children looking like all the other little chubby plebeians at Brighton, was too much.

"I fancy you have not seen my children," he said haughtily; "but....." The music ceases. "Allow me to lead you to your mamma, I am obliged to hand Lady Manvers down to supper, a disagreeable point of *etiquette*."

"Oh, not at all," smiled Rosalie, "for she seems a very sensible, motherly kind of woman, and as to children, you will find her more at home than I am, for she stops every fat baby in its nurse's arms, to ask its age, and its name, and how many teeth it has cut—and every troop of children—ruddy children

on the Downs—come in for a share of her caresses and sugar candy—”

“ You know her ladyship then.”

“ Oh, yes, the Earl of Manvers is a sort of connexion of ours—but see, she is putting on her shawl. Fly to assist her. I can take care of myself.”

Colonel Pevensey was much annoyed. He meant to check Rosalie's impertinence, and impose on her by his assumption of grandeur ; and so he had entailed upon himself the bore of handing down a ‘ motherly woman,’ in a huge turban, a ferocious front, with a purple face, a yellow dress, a short waist, and a red, China crape shawl. A connexion of the Ordes too—and Rosalie saw through it all, as he perceived by the sparkle of her eye and the curl of her lip.

The fat and amiable Countess of Manvers, who had expected no such rigorous attention to etiquette, was in high good humour, when

the arm of Colonel Pevensey was presented to her as haughtily as politeness permitted.

She was pleased with the attention, certainly, for acknowledged precedence is dear to every female heart ; but she was a good deal in awe of the sarcastic and dignified Colonel, and that feeling was the alloy all worldly enjoyment must contain.

Lady Manvers was a parvenue ; forty years before, those who saw the most perfect Hebe, that even Ireland itself ever produced, pronounced that Lord Manvers could produce a very ' fair excuse ' for a very silly match, Lady Manvers having been nothing more nor less than a Dublin inn-keeper's daughter : but now (that like so many other Irish beauties) she had fattened out of all symmetry of feature and of form, and reddened out of all delicacy of complexion and transparency of skin, everybody marvelled what miracle had placed a coronet on her low brow ; but she wore her honours so meekly and good-humouredly, and had borne

through all the trials of a bad husband, and a hundred adorers, so spotless a fame, that she was very popular as a chaperone, a patroness, and a match maker. Her conversation and her behaviour, even after forty years, still showed at once a ludicrous conjunction and contrast—Mary O'Flaherty and the Countess of Manvers—the inn-keeper's daughter and the Lady of an Earl!

The good-humour natural to her as an Irish-woman, and the complaisance once habitual to her as "Mary the Maid of the Inn," and the pride she found to be necessary and the reserve she tried hard to assume, as Mary Countess of Manvers!

"I'm sure, Colonel," she said, smiling and bridling, "all the young ladies will be vexed with me, for engrossing the attentions of their favorite beau. Next to the possession of Colonel Pevensey's hand, I fancy they covet that of his arm." And as she spoke, one forgave the unconquerable brogue, for the sake

of the still sweet smile which revealed a very even set of little, white teeth. "Not but what of course," she added, remembering her dignified position as the lady of the highest rank present, "we, Colonel, must not set the fashion of neglecting the etiquette of society, nor to please others or even ourselves forget what we owe to our rank and station. And yet I'm sorry for the poor girls—nobodies, most of them, but very pretty nobodies, I'm sure. Why there are only the Ordes that I can see, with a drop of blude richer than that of a recent Baronet or a City Knight; and they're but distantly related to us—we have to go a long way back to trace it!"

"So much the better," thought Colonel Pevensey. "How few of the present day can go very far back with any degree of certainty;" and then remarked, with an equivocal smile—

"Who would not go a long way, my dear Countess, to prove himself related to you?"

"Thank you, Colonel," said the unsuspecting lady (nothing doubting) and in the warmth of her Irish heart, squeezing the cold, white, patrician hand of the haughty and astonished Colonel. Then having remarked how much he had danced and talked with Rosalie Orde, and thinking to reward him for his unwonted and (to her) inexplicable urbanity, she beckoned Rosalie towards her, with a smiling eagerness, in which 'Mary O'Flaherty' triumphed over 'The Countess,' and in the same spirit, with a strong and dexterous tug and jerk, worthy of an arm and hand once famous for their skill in shaking feather beds at 'The Shamrock,' she forced Rosalie into a seat on the other side of Colonel Pevensey; thus upsetting a series of dexterous manœuvres and condescending bows with which he had induced Jeannetta and the Count to move towards that enviable seat.

"Miss Rosalie Orde's something of a pet and protégée of mine, Colonel!" she said,

assuming what she meant to be an atoning dignity of manner; "and one day I'll get her a gude husband!—that is if she minds her p's and q's—your p's especially, my luve!" she added in an audible whisper, "for p stands for Pivinsey."

The Colone's haughty lip was curled with a sneer, but Rosalie's irrepressible laugh was so infectious, that he could not but join in it—and the sight of the proud Colonel, sharing a hearty laugh with the parvenue Countess and the merry Rosalie, astounded all the would-be exclusives at the table, and made mirth and good humour the fashion for the rest of the evening.

The laugh they shared so cordially together, having re-established a good understanding between Colonel Pevensey and Rosalie, they talked merrily on together, the sunny smiles of Rosalie thawed the ice of the Colonel's proud reserve—an arch, and yet simple woman, who says whatever comes into a shrewd head,

and a kind, pure heart, is always more likely to subdue a proud, and warm a cold nature, than any artificial, or affected character, however great her experience, or consummate her tact.

The Countess, whose matchmaking was a little in the primitive style of Mrs. Primrose's, (when trying to catch the Squire for her Olivia,) whispered to the Colonel that she was sure, darlint little Clarissa and sweet Marmadock, would dote on that fine tempered creature—"there's something in her Colonel," she added, "that reminds me uncommonly of the first Mrs. Pevensey, sweet soul—her sister's a noble looking girl, it's true—a perfect Juno—but my sweet, fair, feminine Rosalie's the Venus of Medicis—and Mars and Venus all the world over—the bold and the gentle, the proud and the humble the dignified and the captivating!"

"I do not think Miss Rosalie Orde at all to compare to her stately, black-browed sister,

my dear Countess," said the Colonel, who, having taken a few bumpers of excellent champagne, was a little less frigidly reserved than usual.

"Ah, you min! you min!" said her Ladyship, "when did you ever prize the smile you've won, like that you've yet the trouble of winning—but let me tell you, Colonel, Jeannetta Orde, to my thinking, shall give no heart to you, for I fancy she's none left—she wears in her bosom an amulet, even against your proud and irresistible charms, my dear Colonel Pivinsky—and that's first, true love. Come, I'll wager you a dozen of gloves, and another dozen of 'Sillery,' you'll never make the least impression on Jeannetta Orde!"

The spice of coxcombry, which is mixed up in the nature of every man (however haughty, or however humble,) was excited by this challenge Colonel Pevinsky had, at that very moment, close to his proud heart, a letter received just before he set out for the ball

and of which he had not the slightest doubt, Jeannetta was the writer—it breathed a love so passionate, so devoted, and yet so pure—and its language was that of an humility so touching, and a hopelessness so sad, that while it fed the flame Jeannetta's charms had already raised, it fanned, in a still greater proportion, the ineffable hauteur and self-esteem of the Colonel.

For a moment, a thought of putting that letter in the Countess's hand, flitted through his head, (a little giddy with Champagne and adulation) but the thought was no sooner conceived than dismissed—even wine could not make Colonel Pevensey one iota less the gentleman, or rob him of his chivalrous delicacy of feeling, and the dignified reserve of his nature.

“ Well, Colonel,” she said, “ are you afraid to accept my challenge...say half a dozen of each !”

“ The amount of the wager does not terrify

me, my dear Countess...and were the world one entire and perfect chrysolite, as Othello says, and all my own, it would not be too much to stake, for the love of such a woman, as I believe Miss Orde to be...but

“ ‘ If she be not fair for me,
What care I how fair she be.’ ”

“ Well, I'm glad you own she is not fair for you...you men are so conceited, and such boasters, you fancy all are fair for you—and you all brag of many conquests, you niver made.”

The Colonel's answer to this, was a cold stare of haughty surprise, at the Countess's vulgar assurance and impertinent familiarity.

Lady Manvers drew herself up. Mary O'Flaherty remembered she was the Countess of Manvers—she was not going to be put down by a stare from a mere Honourable.

“ Well, Colonel,” she said, “ if you’ll take my advice you’ll —

“ ‘ Forego the petty pride of giving pain
Nor think that conquest justifies disdain.’

Make up to Rosalie—many think her prettier than her sister...and I can answer for it she’s twenty times more amiable...The only advantage Jeannetta has on her side is, that the one you can get, and the other you cannot...Come, you do want a pretty wee wife to sit by you in your phaeton, and head your table...To take care of your sweet Clarissa, and nurse you when you’re old or ailing. Come, if you won’t take the trouble of wooing yourself, let me woo for you...I’ll soon bring her to the pint, Colonel !”

“ Really, your Ladyship takes an interest and a trouble about my concerns, which is more than I desire or deserve...I beg that the names

of these ladies may never again be mentioned between us. If I were disposed to play the wooer I should not do it by proxy, and there are very few ball-room misses, believe me, who have much chance of sitting by my side, or at my table, or of having the charge of my little ones!"

So saying he turned from the irate and purpling Countess to the quiet Rosalie. The Irish blood of Mary O'Flaherty boiled in her veins, and the acquired pride of the Countess made her turban plumes quiver; but native good humour shed its oil over the troubled waves of her bosom.

"Well," she thought, "if I've ruffled him to give her an opportunity of smoothing him its all well. .Nothing becomes a woman like the character of a comforter, and admiration is niver so welcome as when one's jist been put out of conceit with onesilf...It was jist after Paddy had slighted me, and offended me by dancing with Norah Macnamara, that I accepted

the offer of the half tipsy Earl of Manvers, and became a Countess and an unhappy woman ...I dare say I'll be at their widding yet, and then I'll have my rivinge in laughing well at him, and a better rivinge I cannot have, for he's like poor old Abbé Vieillecour, who used to come and drink sugar-and-water—'eau sucré' as he called it—at 'The Shamrock', and taught me French on the sly for a few lumps of sugar now and then, stolen for him from mother's tea-chest... ' *Je crains le rire moqueur plus que la mort* ' he would say, when the wild Irish lads laughed and jisted at his powder, his pig-tail, his bows, and his scrapes...And so I fancy does the Colonel. The old Abbé, and 'The Shamrock'!...What takes my thoughts back to those old times!...Why do I think of father and mother (long ago dust), and whom I once so studied to forget, as a disgrace to the Countess of Manvers! why would I give all my jewels, all my pracadence, and my rank and titles to be again light-hearted Mary

O'Flaherty, with a father and a mother to love, and to love her! Why do I wish I'd forgiven Paddy Roche for flirting with Norah Macnamara, and married him and settled near father and mother, and comforted them and been proud of them, instead of shunning and being ashamed of them! Poor mother! poor father! how they loved and cherished, and petted me! and how I repaid them!...Ashamed of them! Ah I've lived to be ashamed of myself for it—
But what's the use of sighing

“ ‘ When time is on the wing,

Can we prevent its flying?

Then merrily, merrily sing—tra, la, la, la, la, la,
tra, la, la, la, la, la !’

but somehow its in the gayest scenes I'm most depressed...when the Present seems most brilliant the Past comes sweeping over my heart ...I'm thought a merry, good-humoured, happy woman...I've brought no stain on the proud name I'm wedded to—I've no crime, as the

world calls it, to charge myself with ; but yet there's an eternal regret, an undying remorse in my bosom, and like the snake that warmth strengthens to bite—that remorse generally awakes in my breast in scenes of light and warmth, and splendour. The remorse of having slighted in my grandeur those that so cherished me in my mean estate—Oh that I, who would now give ALL for one kiss from my poor mother, one kind word from father, could ever gallop, in my gay coronetted carriage, through Dublin lest they should see me, and blush at any allusion to their poor but honest name !”

The Countess's reverie had filled her eyes with tears, and her heart with the long ago. How little did any, who knew her origin, and envied her elevation, dream of what was passing in the bosom (once so fair though fair no more) on which sparkled the celebrated Manvers diamonds—

“ Wise judges are we of each other !”

Everybody fancied Lady Manvers the merriest and happiest of those lucky parvenues, on whose low brows some mischievous destiny has pitched a coronet—Everybody thought that she had but one tender point, one source of bitterness, her low origin, her mean parentage—and in a general way this was true.

And yet in all good hearts, so strong are the ties of blood, so ineffaceable is the instinct of filial tenderness and devotion, so eternal the memory of the kind parents of our childhood, and so bitter the remorse for slighting their love, and shunning their tenderness, that Mary, Countess of Manvers, would, as we have seen, have given all the world so envied her, and which for many years had been her *all* indeed, to be Mary O'Flaherty once more, with nothing of ingratitude or false unfilial shame and base neglect wherewith to reproach herself. And such we do believe is the case, with all who have not valued (while they possessed it,) at its great, great price, the exquisite tender-

ness and the unspeakable love of a father, and more still—a mother!

Oh, when the vain and bustling world forsakes, and the false light of youth fades from the landscape of life, when by the searching lamp of Truth which Memory's stern hand holds so perseveringly before the fading eyes of middle life or of old age, we shall scrutinize the Past, what blots, what ineffaceable blots on our lives will seem every unkind and undutiful word, what ghastly, gaping wounds every unfilial act or deed! How will the solitude which awaits us all, if we live to be old, be haunted by the gentle remonstrance, the reproachful eye, the once unheeded but then harrowing appeal of the *first* lips we loved, and the *last* (whatever intermediate affections may have bound us) the *last* whose smile we shall long to see again. And if the tenderest, the most dutiful, the most devoted child, can never think of a mother in her grave, without many a sigh for sorrow caused her, and many a passionate regret for

some slight shown, or some wrong done, what must be the horrible remorse of the vain, yet not all, heartless daughters (and the world is full of such) who, in the blinding, engrossing and bewildering "battle of life," the paltry struggle for precedence, and the mean ambition to *seem* rather than to *be*, have shunned and scorned the one friend that nothing could estrange, the guardian angel of the morning of life, a good, a tender mother!

There is so unequal a division of the gifts of life! In nature, the morning sun may be brighter and warmer, but that of evening is richer and more mellow, not so with us; we begin life so rich in its best treasures; spirits unsubdued by suffering; health unimpaired by sickness of soul or body; beauty fresh from "Nature's cunning hand;" powers unexhausted by vain attempts at success, (the very exercise of which is a sort of happiness;) the delicious power to please and to win, and more enchanting still! to be pleased and to be won! Confidence in others! confidence in ourselves!

Friends in lavish abundance ! (the young have so many friends !) all the sweet relations of life unimpaired, and from "Love's shining circle no gem dropped away." Brothers' and sisters' fond and buoyant spirits ; a father's wise protecting affection, a mother whose perennial fount of exquisite tenderness, no faults, no follies of ours can exhaust !

Then the first wild triumphs of vanity, and the exquisite illusions of love. So much for youth, is it not too richly blest, too lavishly apportioned ! while over all this fairy land, Hope sheds a light which bathes the present in a roseate tint and the future in a sunny mist.

And middle age is not all desolate, though harsh experience snatches the lamp from Hope, and we know that confidence is an idle word and that to be and to seem are not all one—that to aim is not to succeed, that to please is a moment's triumph, and to be forsaken and forgotten an eternal regret, that to love is to

be miserable, to be loved a dream, to trust is to be betrayed, and to believe is to be deceived; all this is bitter, but still middle life has its objects and its comforts. The partner of life, (not the angel he seemed) but the partner still, with many faults, has some redeeming virtues. Children spring up and bring, with much misery and fear, much atoning love—our own earthly prospect was dark and bounded, for them, we look again into the blue distance and espy the Alpine heights of success and of fame. That fireside of the heart, a mother's love, remains perhaps to us still, and middle life is not all desolate although its cold realities are "too real."

But now the desolation comes, now the mother is gone to the silent grave—the partner of life has preceded us there, or drags on the isolated existence of egotistical and impassive old age—or sunk in second childhood has out-lived all but his wretched body and its miserable wants. Brothers and sisters have

died away, or live in distant spheres; the body grows feeble, (for the battle of life brings down the strongest at last); children have perished, or are carried away by a jostling crowd, and are grown ambitious or indifferent, or at any rate "this world is too much with them,"—they are not what they were to us—we are not all the world to them. Health, beauty, powers, confidence in others, confidence in ourselves, the power to please and to win, to be pleased and to be won! all, all are gone! Worn, feeble, ill, hopeless, forlorn, memory laden with regret if not remorse—the hour of desolation is indeed come—the inevitable solitude of Age supplies the sweet companionship of Youth. Weary of seeking those who shun us, we totter to some lonely spot—we sit down alone on the cold, flinty shores of Time, and watch the dark waters of Eternity.

There, as even we watch alone, but not companionless, "Light springs up out of darkness, and joyful gladness for those that are true of heart.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

A light rises in the East; look forth aged pilgrim from those cold, flinty shores of Time; look across the dark waves of Eternity.

Search, search thy troubled memory, not for the false joys of youth—not for the mean cares and vile ambitions of middle age! but for the once slighted prayer of thy childhood, learned, alas! by rote! but for the faith, professed but little practised. Hail! old age! no longer desolate and decrepid! a flood of light shall bathe thy soul, a fount of peace and comfort fill thy heart! Believe and hope! Take thy long neglected bible; then, old age, sit at the foot of the Cross; and there, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," await that sleep from which thou shalt awake in thy Saviour's bosom.

Hail, then, divine Religion! all atoning comforter of the soul! We began by grudging youth and middle age their undue share of

happiness and joy; and contemplation has gently led us to this result, that the very solitude and desolation of age, if it indeed lead the pilgrim to the foot of the Cross, is worth ten thousand-fold all the delicious illusions of youth, all the best realities of manhood.

CHAPTER III.

THE PARASITE.

THE Hon. Colonel Pevensey returned from the grand ball, which had been given, (in reality in honor of Jeannetta Orde), extremely discontented with that lovely mystery, and rather out of conceit even with his magnificent self.

But he was infinitely more in love than he would have been, had a haughty and condes-

ending offer of his hand been accepted, with blushing and passionate delight! *C'est la nature des hommes!*

Colonel Pevensey until this evening had had some trouble in persuading himself to accept Jeannetta; now he was resolved to lose no time or trouble in persuading Jeannetta to accept him.

"It must be to pique and annoy me," he thought, "that she flirts so openly with that confoundedly handsome Frenchman; for though Symons thinks him a little in my style, and he might have a fair chance, had he the field to himself, of course she'll despise and cut him directly she discovers that I'm in earnest. No wonder she should doubt it. I can hardly believe it myself. How astonished the world will be!...To have refused a beautiful young Countess in her own right—to have slighted the acknowledged beauty of the Court—the exquisite Miss Vernon—to have declined the hand of the millionaire, Miss Todd (ple-

beian soul!) and countless other aspirants, high born, beautiful, and wealthy, and then to make a match which (respectable enough in itself, for the girl *is* beautiful and well-born) seems almost a *mesalliance* for Colonel Pevensey. Well, I'm in love with her; there's the solution of the enigma—in love with her, or something very like; and love which “lays the shepherd's crook beside the sceptre” shall do a greater wonder still, in making me woo and win this stately nobody! I like her pride; it will put her above all mean jealousies of my little darlings, and a step-mother's petty spite. I am sure she is of a generous nature...I can read the elevation of her soul in her noble brow, and a kind woman's heart in her beautiful eyes and her most roseate and inexplicable smile. Come in!” he said, rather impatiently, as a low knock at the door disturbed his self-complacent reverie.

“It was the Colonel's former aide-de-camp, the wily Symons.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, but I heard you walking up and down the room, and feeling very wakeful, I thought I'd just look in to beg you for a Havannah, (mine are out,) and know how you liked the ball."

"I never care much about a ball," said the Colonel, haughtily "one must be in love, or on the look out, or something of that kind, to make a ball a matter of any importance!"

"Oh, Colonel, I did not imagine that you were likely to enjoy this ball, (brilliant as it really was,) like a girl in her teens—or a poor devil like me, on the look out for some tolerable lass, with a portion, who may take a fancy, if not to me, at least to my uniform—I only meant, I hope you were not unusually bored... I hope the women did not quite overwhelm you—I know they generally do!"

There was a little malice in this, well concealed under a mask of *naiveté*. Symons had noticed Jeannetta's pointed indifference to,

and avoidance of the august Colonel, and her all-absorbing delight in the Count's devoted attentions.

With the deep grudge and keen spite, which parasites always cherish in their hearts, for those they toady and flatter, Symons had revelled in his proud patron's mortification and disappointment.

"Oh, don't talk to me of the women, Symons—I'm weary of them—I went to the ball in a confoundedly ill-humour, and I came away in a worse—I'm bored even at the palace balls, and at Almack's, so you may fancy what I must have been, when the Countess of Manvers was queen of the night."

"Yes, it must have been intolerable to you, of course, Colonel, but I'm sorry I was so mistaken, I thought you seemed in such good spirits, and I'm sure you made little Rosalie Orde very vain, and all the other women very jealous, by letting her talk to you, and sit by you, as you did."

“Miss Rosalie Orde,” said the Colonel, with emphasis—for it jarred on his proudly sensitive ear, to hear a Symons speak thus freely, of the sister of the woman he meant to marry. “Miss Rosalie Orde was one of the very few women present, with any claims on my attentions—I found her a very amusing, lively, and agreeable person.”

“Has she cut the beauty out, Colonel? Has she put that small and perfect aquiline a little out of joint?”

The Colonel, by a cold stare, implied his disgust of Symon’s vulgar familiarity—then seeing him colour up, and look abashed, he said condescendingly:—

“No, my dear Symons, no!—I admire that splendid brunette more than ever—but I can’t make her out—it seems to me, she’s half in love with that foreign detrimental.”

“All a *ruse*, Colonel, a woman’s *ruse* to bring you on, and from which I judge that she’s over head and ears in love with you—and

cannot let matters take their course—but is (excuse me,) a little impatient of your aristocratic apathy and patrician reserve—wants to pique you into jealousy and a proposal.”

“Do you really think so, my dear fellow,” said the Colonel, unbending. “Simons, help yourself and me to a glass of maraschino—thank you; see if you can find a few cakes or biscuits; no, don’t ring, I’ve sent my fellow to bed! Look on the consoles, and in the chiffonier—that’s right—now give me another bumper; it’s very fine liqueur this, a present from my aunt, Lady Barbara! trust a woman, particularly a spinster of quality, for giving you a good glass of maraschino. Symons, fill your glass—here’s to Jeannetta Orde!”

“Here’s to Jeannetta Pevensey! Colonel forgive me, may I take that liberty; I believe it’ll be for your happiness Colonel! or upon my soul Sam Symons is not the man to drink the toast;” and tears of plausibility filled Symon’s eyes as he wrung the Colonel’s hand.

"I believe you, Symons; thank you, my good fellow; thank you for a thousand proofs of zeal and of devotion. The Honourable Mrs. Pevensey! and may she be a good wife to me, and better still a good mother to my angel children!"

"The Honourable Colonel and Mrs. Pevensey, and sweet Miss Clarissa and noble little Marmaduke," said Symons as the Colonel filled his glass again; "Colonel, that beautiful Miss Orde proud and reserved as she seems, is very romantic, and impassioned, perhaps as you mean to marry her, I ought to be careful what I say, but I must tell you too—every night, wrapped in a dark cloak and veil, I see her glide past your windows, watch them as a devotee watches the shrine of a saint, and then hurry away casting many a longing, lingering look behind."

"Impossible!" said the Colonel, actually blushing, while tears of emotion filled his fine eyes. "She cannot be so rash, sweet girl! to

what does she not expose herself; what love, what devotion!"

"I dare say she's there now," said Symons.

"Heaven forbid," replied the Colonel. "If I thought so, I would go to her, and propose to her at once, and beg her for my sake never again to venture out alone at night. He walked to the window and looked out, much agitated, much excited. Symons followed.

"Oh, it would so wound her to be detected, by you especially! look Colonel, look."

The Colonel looked forth, and though the night was dark, he discerned a slender female form robed in black, moving in the distance, and turning and stopping in her wild and hurried retreat to gaze again and again at the windows of his house.

"She is gone!" said Symons. "Do not follow her to-night, to-morrow you can put a stop to this dangerous evidence of devoted love, of course when engaged to you, your slightest wish will be her law. Good night, dear

Colonel, what a good thing it must be, to be a Pevensey with your face, fortune and figure, instead of being a Symons with mine. To be sure if the pleasure of love is the wooing, we poor devils beat you hollow, for we woo and woo in vain for ever and ever, and you have no wooing to do; the women do it all for you! ha, ha, ha! good night, Colonel."

"Good night Symons, I can depend on your discretion? your attachment I well know I can rely upon—try to forget what you have seen—I should be sorry when you are in the presence of Mrs. Pevensey, that you should remember this romantic but rash devotion of Jeannetta Orde's."

"Never fear, Colonel; the lady you distinguish by giving her your name, will seem to me too exalted for me to remember anything but that I am her servant, her slave!"

So saying Symons bowed himself out of the room, and when he had reached his own, and not till then he sate down and indulged in the

hissing, venomous little laugh with which toadies regale themselves at the expense of their patron-dupees!

“Bravo! capital! pompous and conceited fop! Now, will he propose to Jeannetta, whom I could worship *d’avance* for the cold and scornful rejection with which she will meet his condescending proposals; nothing less would have brought the apathetic coxcomb to the point! It will not do to let him discover though, that it is that exquisite Violet who so madly worships this incarnation of pride! I’ll write her an anonymous line that shall sting her into resigning these nightly visits to the shrine of her dangerous idol! well might he be proud of such a conquest as that. The world is full of Jeannettas, it contains but one Violet, and that Violet shall not be trampled on by you, cold aristocrat, if I can place it on my bosom and wear it in my heart of hearts! oh, the pleasure of playing off so haughty a

puppet as Pevensey. And now to bed, to dream of Violet !”

For some little time after Symons had left him, Colonel Pevensey stood watching the clouds hurrying over the moon’s fair face, and then he opened the drawer of the chiffonier, and took out two beautiful boxes of French puzzles and two exquisite little Geneva watches, chains and seals.

“ I told them I would atone to them for going to the ball instead of having a juvenile party on my Clarissa’s birth-day.”

He put the watches and toys in a basket, and stole up stairs.

He passed through a large, airy, day-nursery, the walls of which were stuck all over with prints of Cœk Robin, and the tragedy of his death—Red Riding Hood, and her tale of woe—The Babes in the Wood, and all the delightful and touching fictions of babyhood—a noble rocking-horse, a swing, a baby-house

—toys in abundance of every kind, revealed the retreat of the happy children of a wealthy, a fond, an indulgent parent !

In the sleeping nursery was a large bed, in which an upper and an under nurse snored aloud, and opening out of it were two little dressing-rooms, each containing a beautiful little couch shaded with white and rose coloured muslin curtains, and on the snowy pillow of one, lay the perfect profile of Clarissa while her golden hair waved over its undulations, and on the other was seen the head of one of the noblest and handsomest boys father ever boasted. The children formed a striking and beautiful contrast—little Clarissa's features were perfectly Grecian, except that the forehead was loftier and more prominent than we see them in the Venus, and this by causing a slight indentation between the brows, gave an individuality to the countenance, and took from it the stony cast of the perfect antique. The complexion was fair, with the transparent fairness of a shell, and the

cheek tinted like its centre...and on that cheek the eye-lashes of golden brown fell from snowy lids which concealed large hazel eyes full of love and soul...the hair, abundant, naturally waving and of the aristocratic gold of Oasian, had been carefully gathered by the nurse under a little scarlet silk net, but much of it had escaped the pretty bondage, and floated over the snowy pillow...a little cambric night-dress, *à la grècque*, (delicately frilled,) left part of the rounded, waxen chest exposed, and the scarlet cords and tassels of the silken net mixed with some of the golden tresses, and formed a glowing harmony of colour worthy of Titian's pencil!

The beautiful little rosy mouth, half open, murmured: "Dear, dear papa!" and in the small patrician hand was a sprig of heath Colonel Pevensey had given her from his breast, where it had been placed by one of his hopeless admirers...the forward and sparkling Miss Fitzwilliam.

Who could marvel that even the proud

Colonel's eyes moistened as he looked on so much loveliness and love! Long did he gaze on that sweet sleeping child, and then he gently placed the watch in its pretty morocco case, and the bright box of French toys on a little table by her side, and those who looked upon Colonel Pevensey as the coldest and haughtiest of aristocrats..."the man without a tear"... would have marvelled to see him bend meekly down at the foot of that little snow-white bed, and while soft tears filled his eyes, and soft emotions swelled his heart, humbly pray his God to protect, his Saviour to redeem, and the Holy Spirit to sanctify that motherless girl, imploring all, to guide him for her happiness rather than his own, in the step he meditated, and to keep her ever pure and happy as she lay before him there!

He then stole gently to the bed-side of his boy...even at that early age the attitude was bold and the outline masculine, compared to the soft grace of little Clarissa...the complexion

was rich and warm, the cheek though sunburnt was of a clear and glowing red. He now already showed a slight inclination to the patrician curve we call aquiline, from the high brow rose rich and spiral curls of brightest chestnut, which clustered in thick short rings round a throat whose beautiful white showed a curious contrast to the sunburnt face. He had thrown almost all covering from him in the impatience of boyhood, and the father marvelled at the strength and development of the limbs, which united the graceful and the powerful, in a manner seldom seen except among the patrician race in England.

An emotion more proud (but less tender than that he felt for his little girl,) swelled the father's bosom, as he placed his gifts by his boy's side, and breathed a prayer for him, less likely to be heard on high, because this world, its hopes, its schemes, and its mean ambitions, had more to do with it.

"He is a true Pevensy," thought the

father, "nothing of his mother, but those long dark lashes, and that small, rosy mouth ...am I not blest indeed, with such a boy as that, to transmit my time-honoured name, and bear all its honours, (even if I should not live to wear them.) With Marmaduke to glory in, and Clarissa to love, what is a wife to me, except, as Symons says, to sit by my side in a carriage, or at the head of my table? to talk and sing to me when I'm cheerful, and to be silent when I'm vexed? to tell Marmaduke tales of chivalry, and romp with the wild boy, and to sing sweet ballads to Clarissa, and dress her doll, and teach her all soft feminine accomplishments, as no hireling ever can? Yes! I think we do want such a person here—and I think these darlings, if not myself, will find a comfort in Jeannetta!"

Poor Jeannetta! could she have heard the soliloquy, would the Colonel's offer have swelled her breast with pride—but if woman

ever knew half the remote and indirect causes of the homage she receives, and the compliments she delights in—would she go forth so “flown with insolence,” and so inflated with conceit?

The proud Jeannetta, to talk or to be silent, according to a haughty master’s merry or captious mood! to tell tales to his boy, and dress dolls for his girl!—to romp or to teach!—both a drudgery!—the one active, the other passive! Art thou to be wooed and wedded, for such objects as these? What then?”...

Are not the loveliest and most gifted women—with all their passionate devotion and lofty aspirations—their captivating accomplishments, and their mental powers—too often wedded to those, who, whatever they may pretend, while they seek to win them, have no object, when won, but that of making them glittering toys—or household drudges—resistless victims of ill-temper—discontente—ennui—creatures always to be scolded, slighted, and found fault

with, with impunity—taken from an admiring circle, and a cherishing family, from parents who dote on, and brothers and sisters who love, not merely “to suckle fools, and chronicle small beer,” but to be rated the while, as menials who can give warning, are never rated, slighted, disparaged, the ill-requited, unthanked!—playthings—housekeepers—nurses—alias wives.

Woman and her master, indeed! Who does not rejoice, when, as in the case of Colonel Pevensey, the haughty proposal meets with a haughtier refusal—and he who is so ready to humble her, he pretends to seek to honour, is at the very outset, humbled to very dust himself. Had Colonel Pevensey, who, in spite of his inordinate pride, hauteur, and conceit, had some generous and noble feelings, some depth of affection, and some elevation of soul, had he wished to marry Jeannetta, because he felt that home is not home, without a woman’s gentle presence—that there is a void in every

manly bosom, a wife only can fill—had he wished to woo her, in order to give to one so dignified and deserving, all the advantages of his position, and all the enjoyments of his wealth—to associate her with his children, that they might emulate her graces and her virtues, and learn from her to please and to win—had he towards Jeannetta, or any other woman he meant to marry, felt any such regard and respect, or entertained any such intentions, as those we should have wished him, the reward of all honourable suits, a prompt and flattering acceptance. But as it is—even with a little partiality for the haughty Colonel, we are not sorry to see him humbled—and we are glad he should learn that he may sue in vain, and that there is a woman who can say him “nay!”

During the first day or two of Lady Beauchamp's visit, Mrs. Orde good humoured and confiding, quite secure of De Crevecœur's devotion to herself, and proud of exhibiting her influence over him, promoted, and indeed,

playfully commanded him, to pay a great deal of attention to her wily sister-in-law.

“The Captain dearest! will do anything to oblige me, or any friend of mine,” she would say, “let him escort you, dear Eleanor! make any use you can of him.”

“The day is ours *before* wedlock,” she thought to “herself, though for every week of power before marriage, we often pay with years of slavery after. Poor Crevecoeur! it is putting his devotion to a very severe test, for Eleanor speaks wretched French, and looks quite a wreck. But it will put her into a good humour, to have that fine, handsome Captain to escort her, and I will repay him by an extra smile or two; I wonder what they will talk about to beguile the way, the weather and the hour, and the tide I dare say.”

Not so, not so, at least not long, did the weather and the hour and the tide engross two interested and ambitious schemers.

Lady Beauchamp, rather admiring the Captain as a man, and adoring him as a Croesus, soon led the conversation into the channel in which she wished it to flow. She was not quite so wretched a French scholar as she had led Mrs. Orde to believe, and she soon contrived to convey, amid professions of affection and admiration for her *belle Soeur*, several falsehoods and one important fact; the falsehoods were, that Mrs. Orde was a good deal her senior, that the dear *naïve* creature was by birth quite a rustic, that she was a good deal made up both in face and figure, and that though she seemed so smiling and frank she was of a very jealous and artful temper; all this, the Captain heard, but did not heed, but what he both heard and heeded was the one fact, that her fortune depended on widowhood, and that a second marriage would leave her with scarcely a subsistence!

“Men are so different,” said Lady Beau-

champ, "my poor brother married her for love, and always seemed *so* fond of her! and yet, he has cruelly compelled her either to remain single (a sad fate for a sensitive woman Captain) or to be an incumbrance on the man who loves her well enough to marry her; now Sir George Beauchamp was a stern, jealous, harsh man, grudged me even my pin money during his life, and used to say he would compel me to be a widow or a beggar, I expected nothing less, and so I found he left me uncontrolled mistress of a thousand a year, and no proviso about widowhood at all!"

Now this was perfectly true, except in the exaggerated amount of her ladyship's jointure.

The Captain's heart beat quick as he listened.

"However," she added, "they were perhaps both justified in the judgment they formed of their wives. Mrs. Orde is very well disposed, poor dear loving creature! to marry any man, whose income would justify her in sacrificing

her own, and indeed she has been, ever since her first year of widowhood, keenly on the look out. I have often quite wept over her disappointments. Orde of course foresaw all this, while my poor George was aware, that though I had no will of my own when I married him, taken from school, and my doll (scarcely knowing what a man was, or what marriage meant) to preside at his table; he, I say, knew full well, that before I was twenty, I had become so strong in mind and so refined in taste, that there was not that man in all the circles of fashion who could have *won* that hand he had obtained without the trouble of *winning* it; and has it not proved so? The offers I, or my poor jointure have had, would fill a thick book, and here I am, Lady Beauchamp still! while if I mistake not, my sister has at length won the love she so well deserves, and I may congratulate myself on a new brother-in-law; dear Rosa! I am so glad she has a chance of a

second husband at last; "the desire accomplished is so sweet to the soul."

"And who," said the Captain, with apparent unconcern; "who is the happy man to be blest with the plump hand of the merriest and kindest little widow in the world?"

"Surely, Captain Crevecœur, you are joking when *you* ask such a question!"

"Joking! not at all—you mean to say that Mrs. Orde meditates a second marriage."

"Yes."

"And with whom?"

"With whom? why with you!" laughed Lady Beauchamp, while the Captain affected to look first puzzled, then amazed, then angry, and finally burst out into a scouting laugh in which Lady Beauchamp joined.

"My dear Lady Beauchamp," at length he said taking her thin hand, and gently pressing it; "I am eternally your debtor—sans m'en douter j' étais sur le bord d'un précipice... For that man," he added, with laudible enthusiasm,

"is indeed on the edge of a precipice, whose thoughtless attentions, raise any hopes in the breast of a charming woman, which he has not the least idea or intention of realising. Mrs. Orde is a kind, good, creature, but not at all my style, much too merry, loquacious, and (forgive me) too much *embonpoint*; the sad, the fragile and the pensive beauty has ever been my *beau ideal*! and who," he added rising in enthusiasm, "with such a taste, could look at Mrs. Orde, when her enchanting sister-in-law was by her side. I have been to blame, much, very much to blame, j'adore le sexe! but oh that my thoughtless folly should cost one amiable woman a sigh!"

And he by some internal process, concocted and produced a tear, while his fat form heaved and puffed like a pair of bellows.

"It is done," he said; "it is a lesson, a bitter one, but not learnt in vain...if you are right, if you are not mistaking general urbanity and universal encouragement, for par-

ticular affection, for me...I fly the Marine Parade...I fly from Brighton...from Albion... Oh that I could add from myself..."

As all these *flights* did not at all suit Lady Beauchamp, she, smilingly and gently, said:

"'Fly not yet!' but be advised by me, preserve with my sister-in-law your accustomed manner, through this evening...watch her well, study her looks, weigh her words...and if you cannot detect in all, the peculiarities of a lady who considers herself all but *fiancée*, never trust a woman's tact and judgment again."

"Kind and warning angel!" cried Creve-cœur, with well acted rapture, "sent just in time; Alas, to what, in my passionate heart, may not gratitude and admiration lead!"...

"To nothing but friendship!" sighed Lady Beauchamp.

"What man so placed can answer for himself,—Friendship," he added, "between man and woman, in their prime, *C'est l'amour sans ailes!*" Alas that love is so seldom mutual

the unloved, love us, and unloved, we love. Is it not so most amiable of friends!—”

“Not always,” replied the elderly husband-hunter. “But do not detain my hand, Captain, we are in sight of the bay-windows of my sister’s drawing-room. They would have a good laugh at me indeed; if I, who have always kept all your treacherous race at such a distance—were to make such a signal exception in your favor—see, there is my sister—she perceives you—look...how she welcomes you with her fat white hand.”

Lady Beauchamp (on entering the drawing-room) perceived at a glance that something very important had occurred.

Mrs. Orde looked excited, pleased, rather unusually consequential, and somewhat mysterious withal. Jeannetta’s marble cheek was slightly flushed; Rosalie looked pale and uncomfortable; and Miss Macpherson was sitting on a distant sofa, full drest, even to powder, a triumphant colour on her wrinkled cheek, and

a huge fan, representing shepherdesses with high head-dresses, and waists like inverted extinguishers, watching their sheep with half-closed eyes, and keeping at bay with their crooks, those born foes of helpless innocence, wolves and men!

After a little half playful, half jealous railery from Mrs Orde to the Captain, about the length of his absence, he took his leave; and then Lady Beauchamp inquired so earnestly what had happened, that Mrs. Orde, who was in reality, as eager to tell as her sister was to hear, with many a coy delay and extorted promise of inviolable secrecy, announced the astounding fact that the Hon. Colonel Pevensey had proposed to Jeannetta; and the still more amazing intelligence that Jeannetta had at once and positively rejected him.

Lady Beauchamp turned pale with envy at such a tribute to her niece's charms; but consoled herself with the recollection that, after all that niece by her idiotic preference of a

foreigner, had lost all chance of an English coronet, which, had she accepted Colonel Pevensey, would at the demise of his invalid brother, have been certainly hers ; and as it was an older and far more honorable title than the Countess of Tunbridge, Lady Beauchamp would have had the mortification of seeing her daughter eclipsed by her niece.

When Jeannetta had left the room, to array herself for an expected visit from the Count, Lady Beauchamp begged so earnestly to be told the particulars of this extraordinary event, that Rosalie playfully complied in the following words.

“ You must know, then, dear aunt, that soon after you went out, the Colonel’s man came with a note, to say that his master intended himself the honor of calling in the course of an hour ; and as his visit had reference to business of importance, he hoped to find the ladies at home.

“ Jeannetta, who had intended riding at

that time with Count Gonzalve de Montfaucon, was very angry when mamma insisted on her receiving this visit:

“ At the appointed hour, punctual to a moment, the Colonel’s loud, imperious knock shook the house, and a few roses on to Jeannetta’s white cheek—a few lilies to mine, mamma’s knitting needles (busy with a long purse for the Captain) and a sprinkling of powder with which Miss Jenny had adorned her ‘tête’ on the august occasion of this formal proposal for her niece’s hand, and triumphant conquest and defeat of so formidable a member of the abhorred race of man.

“ He came in, looking very stately—rather pale—but, I must own, more handsome, and more princely than any one I ever saw.

“ Still his air was not that of a suitor imploring a favor, but of a sultan conferring one. Jeannetta did not yield in dignity and reserve to her lordly lover. You may be sure, aunt, King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba might

have exchanged just such glances and such greetings as they did. Mamma was, as she always is, kind and cordial; I was friendly because I almost hoped he might prevail, and save me the misery of seeing Jeannetta the wife of a foreigner and a papist; but the gem of the piece was aunt Jenny. She drew near the Colonel, and so pointedly received him, with the curtsy she had been taught to make, when presented to Queen Charlotte at her coronation, that the Colonel was obliged to respond with a minuet bow; and then she drew near, fixed herself in state in an arm-chair, plied her fan, and began evidently to await his opening of the subject.

“ Too proud, and too full of his own ineffable, superiority to be put out of countenance by anything, the Colonel said—

“ ‘ Some gentlemen, Miss Orde, might feel rather abashed by such a formal family conclave sitting, as it were, in judgment upon him; but what I have made up my mind to do, I care

not who may witness; and what I shall not delay to proclaim to the world, I am not ashamed to reveal to this amiable circle.'

" ' And what may that be, I beg to know, Colonel?' said Miss Jenny, with a pomp surpassing his own, and bridling so, that a small cloud of powder rose out of her *toupé*—fanning herself the while with a vehemence that sent it over the immaculate and superfine undress coat of the Colonel's uniform.

" Drawing himself up to his full height—half shutting his fine eyes, and twirling his auburn moustache between his taper and pearl-white finger, and thumb, (thereby revealing a half-scornful, half-saucy curl of his chiselled lip,) he said:—

" ' What that may be, Madam, I believe this lady (your great-niece, if I mistake not,) is as able to inform you as I am—at least, if her modesty has allowed her to appreciate at their full meaning, the attentions I have had the plea-

sure of paying her, she has not overrated them, if—”

“ My great-niece, Miss Jeannetta Orde, sir,” said Miss Jenny, (rushing in with more warmth than politeness,) “ is not likely to overrate any mon’s attentions, she is too much used to be woo’d, sir, to, as the immortal Milton says :

“ ‘ Unsought be won ! ’ ”

“ ‘ For that reason, Madam, as it is my object to woo, and forgive me, if I add to win, I am here to confirm, by a formal proposal, what, I think, my attentions to Miss Orde must have led her to expect.’ ”

“ ‘ Speak for yourself, child ! ’ said Miss Jenny, scarlet with wounded pride and maiden wrath. ‘ The suitors of these days, are so unlike what they were in my young time, they think so much of themselves, and so little of

the ladies they address—they make so sure of success, and seem so much mair as if they were doing honour than seeking it, that I ken na' how to deal wi' sic' wooers. It's the Colonel's intention, he tells ye, lassie, to woo and to win you. I fancy he'll find it easier to do the first than the last, or ye're na true descendent o' the house o' Mapherson, and na true grond niece o' mine. Speak, till him, Jeannetta, yoursel'—I've dune !”

“ ‘ And not before it was high time, madam,” said the Colonel rising, and reddening with wrath. ‘ Your age, your sex, and your relationship to Miss Orde, have alone induced me to tolerate your unjustifiable interference, in a matter entirely between Miss Orde and me and your most extraordinary attack upon myself.”

“ ‘ My age, sir, (rude as it is in a gentleman and an officer, to allude to it in my presence,) gives me experience, and entitles me to reverence ...my sex raises me far above you and all mon-

kind, and indeed, from its pure and lofty eminence, I look with scorn on all the grosser race of mon—my relationship to Miss Orde, makes me jealous of her honour and her dignity, as of my ain and so now, sir, that you've roused the auld Macpherson bluid in my veins, I'll tell you that those wha woo the dochters o' the house of Macpherson—woo wi bended knee, and dooncast e'en, and trembling voice; impressed wi' the leddies' beauties and merits, and na' fu' of their ain conceits—a' the attentions they can offer, overpaid by the privilege of offering them—na' insolently hinting at hopes and expectations they've excited, but humbly confessing those they have presumed, (in silence and secresy,) almaist to venture to entertain—to such suit alane, did leddies listen in my time, and of my hoose, and sic alaue did min dare to prefer, at the feet of the maidens of the house o' Macpherson—and were I, sir, so unfortunate as *not* to be of the sex, with which you have *dared* to reproach me! it's

not with words only, I'd answer your haughty airs to my great-niece, and your rude attack upon myself—we'd measure then, Colonel—swords instead of wits—and I might come off conqueror then, as I flatter myself I do now!"

" 'As you most certainly do, dear Madam!' said the Colonel, thinking it best to conciliate the eccentric oddity, and virulent old man hater, who evidently had so much power and influence in the house, and who seemed to hold in her withered hands, like a second Atropos, the threads of his destiny, as far as matrimony was concerned.

" 'It will not do,' thought the haughty Colonel, "to be rejected by these absurd nobodies—to propose at all, is weak and demeaning enough, but to propose and be rejected would be a positive disgrace, and make me the jest of all the clubs in St. James's—and yet so full of punctilio is this old Scotch spinster, that perhaps she will induce

her saucy niece, to forego the pride of accepting for the greater glory of refusing, Colonel Pevensey!

“ ‘ Miss Macpherson,’ he said, ‘ times are, I own, changed for the worse, very much for the worse, since gentlement came on the same sweet errand to you, that I do to your lovely niece; the manner and the garb are changed, dear madam, and most decidedly, I own, for the worse—but the heart is the same, and true love, madam, is the only thing that beat the same in Adam’s breast, as it does in that of the humblest of his sons.’

“ ‘ I ken na,’ said Miss Macpherson, ‘ what Adam has to do wi’ it, Colonel Pevensey. I have always conseedered that Eve mad hersel a warld too cheap, wi’ a’ her advantages, parsonal and intellectual, and when we remember too she was the only woman in the warld, and might have had it a’ her ain way, to be sae promptly won by a creature wi very sma’ intellectual development in my opinion—a being

without energy to be either vary gude or vary bad—wha' felt na thirst for knowledge like our hapless but enterprising Mither, or if he did and had let

“ I dare na, wait upon I would,”

and without courage to be first, was weakly imitative eno' to follow in doing wrang!—A vary pompous, time serving, cooardly, imitative conceited fellow I have always conseedered Adam!—very fit to till the ground and tend the cottle, but vary unfit to rule a creature sa far his superior, as was our mither Eve—Na! na! to my thinking Adam was but a sorry coof after a', and Eve had but a puir bargain wi' him, or I'm much mistaken--Indeed its my opeenion, Colonel, that the curse was laid sae heavily on her, because she alane had fortitude and courage to bear it—I believe wi' you, sir, that Adam and his true luvie, *are* the type of a' his sons and a' their selfish passions, and if Eve had but been true to hersel and chosen a seengle life...not

ainly she'd have been a worshipped queen instead of a wretched droodge, jist, made to suckle fules and chronicle sma' beer, but there'd have been na need of the first deluge...nor to my thinking of a secoud...to poonish the pride, vanity, and wickedness of a' the sons o' men.'

“ ‘ Well, madam,’ said the Colonel, ‘ your views on these matters are far more original than orthodox. However, I cannot waste, in pleading Adam’s cause, the time I wish to devote to urging my own suit. Be sure, Miss Macpherson, that though bended knees, swords, solitaires, and sacques are out of fashion—true love neither is, nor ever will be so...and the reverence and affection with which I now offer my hand and heart to Miss Orde, are as deep as if I did it with all the ceremonious punctilio of the last century. Miss Orde to you, let me appeal...If I have ever found any favour in those beautiful eyes, and if that kindest and noblest of hearts has ever felt any interest in

my passion and my destiny, let those sweet lips pronounce the 'Yes!' that is to make me happy.'

" ' Now then, Jeannetta, speak for yoursel, and forget na' yer a woman o' speerit and my grond niece.' "

" ' Colonel Pevensey!' said Jeannetta, gently but very firmly, while a beautiful colour spread over her snow-drop cheek, and a little emotion lighted her black eyes, ' you have been I believe from your earliest youth the spoiled child of the world and its women, and great allowances should always be made for that unfortunate, blinded,...and forgive me, egotistical being...a spoilt child ! It is, therefore, without any resentment that I assure you, that the attentions you think so much of, are in my opinion anything but flattering...in all of them, forgive me, self-love seems to me to predominate...You seem actually, as if you fancied that you condescended, in noticing a lady whom you

yet mean to make the arbitress of your fate—you appear as if you thought you conferred an honour, where (forgive me) every courteous and chivalrous gentlemen feels that he is imploring one. This may do, sir, (as I believe it does) in the world of fashion, where hauteur, non-chalance and conceit, win that favour, women should only accord to merit, to true tenderness, and to delicate and self-forgetful devotion; but I am not one of that false, vain, and hollow clique you call ‘the world!’ The slight notice, (for to my thinking,) it is nothing else, which you have *deigned* to take, of me and mine, has often amused but never affected me—and in all respects, were I asked to describe the man, I should glory, not to raise to the throne of my own heart, but to hurl from the pinnacle of conceit in his own, not to take an honest pride in accepting, but an equally honest delight in rejecting, that man would be the one whose disdainful attentions, and haughty conviction,

that his slightest smile is an honour, his merest wish a law, and his haughtiest intimation, a welcome suit—in short, Colonel Pevensey—!’

“ ‘ You cannot be in earnest, my dear Miss Orde,’ said Colonel Pevensey, with a forced smile; but he was very angry—so angry, indeed, that he grew very pale, and his lip quivered with emotion.

“ ‘ Why not?’ asked Jeannetta, calmly.

“ ‘ Exoctly!’ said Miss Jenny Macpherson. ‘ What for na’!—Why suld na’ a woman be mair in earnest in refusing than in accepting you, Colonel!’

“ ‘ There is no reason why she should not, in most cases, my dear madam, but I hope there aresome in this, why she should!...Do not trifle, my dear Miss Orde, with the affections you have won—tell me how to suit my words and manners to your taste...give me hope that time may enable me to make myself more acceptable, and to ripen the little preference you may ever have felt for me into a lasting affection—

Do not suffer your kind aunt's dignified but rather antiquated notions, to make you exact what the age does not produce—a Sir Charles Grandison—And above all, do not, by a refusal so positive as to destroy hope, let pride put an eternal barrier between our happiness, and forgive me if I say it—our inclinations.'

" 'Did ever mortal woman hear the like?' said Miss Macpherson.

" 'Colonel!' said Jeannetta. 'you are under some strange delusion, for which you have to thank yourself, not me. However much you may have been flattered by others—However much you may have flattered yourself, I have never condescended to flatter you. You were never more to me, than any other slight acquaintance, nor have your attentions, (much as you seem to think of them) been greater than those most gentlemen pay to the ladies at whose houses they visit. But had they been of the most earnest and devoted nature, the result would have been exactly the same—there is no

fear of wounding the pride, or hurting the feelings of one so popular and so idolized as Colonel Peversey, when I say I am rustic enough not even to admire him. One, so well known to be to the taste of all the beauties of the Court, cannot be much distressed at learning that he is not to mine! I wish at once and for ever to extinguish hope, and to put the eternal barrier you allude to, not between inclinations which, on my side, do not exist, but between ourselves and any allusion to this subject.'

" 'There spake my ain Jeannetta,' said Miss Macpherson triumphantly.

" 'Oh, Jeannetta,' said Mrs. Orde, who had not spoken before, but had been apparently busy with a purse she had only inextricably entangled, 'take some little time to consider of the honor Colonel Peversey has done you.'

" 'Sister,' said Rosalie, 'before you refuse one so every way suited to you, let me implore you to give Colonel Peversey an

opportunity of proving that he is attached to you.'

" 'Thank you, dear Mrs. Ordel thank you sweet Miss Rosalie,' said the Colonel, not only much humbled by Jeannetta's refusal, but really very anxious not to appear, at his age and with his pretensions, in the character of the rejected suitor of a country girl! "Do persuade my haughty and lovely tyrant to give me an opportunity of proving how deep and how sincere is the love, that can thus humble at her feet the last of the Pevenses'."

" 'The more deep and the more sincere that affection, Colonel Pevensey!' said Jeannetta kindly, 'the more does it entitle you to candor and consideration; whether under other circumstances you could have conquered my natural prejudice against fashionable men of your caste and clique, I cannot say. It is possible perhaps that a noble heart and a powerful mind, may be disguised under the repelling

disdain, affectation and nonchalance which seem to bespeak a weak head and a narrow heart; but to me individually, even such a discovery would be unimportant, for you cannot win what I have not to lose. My hand is all but promised; and my heart is entirely and fervently devoted to another.'

" 'I'm grieved to hear you say that of any man,' said Miss Macpherson, 'a preference for a seingle life is the best excuse any woman can mak for declining an offer of marriage!'

Rosalie wept and said, "Oh sister, is it indeed so certain! Is there no hope?"

"Mrs. Orde remarked that it was a rule with her not to seek to influence the conduct of her daughters in such matters, but that were her wishes of any weight in the scale, they were all on Colonel Pevensey's side.

"The Colonel rose, cold, sarcastic and stately, very pale and his eyes flashing. He bowed proudly all round to the party, and said, 'Good morning ladies, I shall not apologize for

an intrusion which Miss Orde's conduct, (as she well knows), so fully justified; to a true lady there is but little triumph in rejecting one she has led to propose. All I request is, that whenever Miss Orde tells the astounding and incredible tale of Colonel Pevensey's proposal, she will relate also the unusual, furtive, (and forgive me) imprudent proofs of affection which brought him to her feet. I have the honour to wish you good morning ladies!

“ ‘What can he mean Jeannetta?’ said Rosalie.

“ ‘Have you ever encouraged him, my darling?’ said Mrs. Orde.

“ ‘Mane,’ cried Miss Macpherson, “he manes the conceited, inflated fop!) that he construes every look into adoration, and every smile at his vonity into encouragement and admiration!’

“ ‘I care not what he means,’ said Jeannetta; ‘my own conscience acquits me of one iota of coquetry, or one jot of vanity in my very slight intercourse with him. My whole

thoughts and feeling are so devotedly and entirely Gonzalve's that I really have been often scarcely aware of this ineffable coxcomb's disdainful attentions.'

" ' Well, there's no use in regretting it,' said Mrs. Orde, drying her eyes; ' it's done, and it can't be undone.'

" ' It is a thousand pities,' said Rosalie. ' How noble, I must say—how beautiful he looked.'

" ' There's never any reason to regrit refusing a mon. It's when woman is weak eno' to accept him she's cause for regrit; and as for being a thousand pities, Rosalie, it would have been a pity the conceited creature suld na ha' had the gude lesson my ain Jeannetta has taught him the day; but it is surely na pity that he suld learn himsel' and teach his fellow fops that British leddies are not to be treated like Eastern slaves; and that the very king of coxcombs can be humbled to the dust by a

country girl, when some o' the auld Macpherson bluid flows in her veins !'

Such was the curious account of an honor which filled Lady Beauchamp's heart with spite and envy; and a conviction (judging of Jeannetta by herself) that some very pointed and even inexcusable encouragement had brought the proud Colonel to her niece's feet. But to her mind this circumstance rather increased the triumph of the rejection. She did not envy her the distinction of this proposal, more than she did the skilful daring and successful tact and tactics which she believed had secured her the triumph of rejecting him.

But Colonel Pevensey, with his fortune, his advantages, and his wealth, (to say nothing of his position and popularity) would have been so much greater a match in her opinion, than even the Count, that her envious heart was almost reconciled to her niece's marriage with the one, so much more would she have consi-

dered her daughters and herself eclipsed by her union with the other.

She won Jeannetta's heart by praising her, with well acted enthusiasm, for her noble and disinterested devotion to her admirable Count; and warmly embracing her, advised her, in order that she might break no more hearts, to accept the Count at once, and fix the day.

Jeannetta buried her beautiful and blushing face in the hollow bosom of her wily and treacherous counsellor—told her she had been compelled by her mother to promise not positively to engage herself till she had spent a few weeks in London; and passionately begged her aunt to use her influence with her mother to accelerate their departure from Brighton, and to commence and curtail their London campaign. This Lady Beauchamp promised to do; and retired to her dressing-room, to try the aid of all 'the cosmetic powers,' and all the arts of the toilette to enable her to eclipse her sister-

in-law, and complete her conquest of Captain Crevecœur.

She had almost resolved, urged by the sight of a lank purse and an empty pocket-book, a dishonored cheque, and several long, bluish-looking wafered epistles, to carry the affair by a *coup de main*, and to elope from Brighton with the Captain, or to be privately married to him there, if she could reside in the parish long enough for the purpose.

She was resolved on one course or the other—whichever the Captain himself seemed most to approve of.

If her own charms were somewhat faded, she took care that her toilette should be of the freshest and brightest—if her eyes did not sparkle, she had gems that did, with a lustre dearer to Crevecœur than that of the brightest eyes in the world—there was only *just*, (as Phœbe said), her face that was a little faded, and a little the worse for wear.

Everything else was a tasteful mixture of velvet, satin, blonde, lace, embroidery, and cashmere. She certainly did look handsomer (thus attired) in the eyes of an interested foreign fortune-hunter, than Mrs. Orde, who, conscious of a still blooming face and plump figure, had made little toilette for a quiet dinner at home, and in a dark blue silk dress up to her ears (in the unbecoming fashion of the day) and in a Pamela cap, appeared quite a dowdy beside her full-dressed sister-in-law.

The three foreigners were invited to dine with the Ordes. Jeannetta (like her aunt) being anxious to please the fastidious taste of Count Gonzalve de Montfaucon, had drest herself with the anxious care, with which a woman dresses to please a lover who takes a pride and interest in her toilette, and whose heart adores her the more, the more she dazzles his eyes and bewilders his brain. Her hair, so carefully braided, was wreathed with white jasmine and scarlet geranium—her arms and neck were

bare, and set off by lace and pearls; while a dress of Indian muslin, flounced with needlework to the waist, and that waist confined by a broad geranium sash, and a scarf of the same color flung around her, shewed her to as much advantage as her loving heart could wish.

Rosalie on the contrary, despising the Baron, and not unwilling that he should know it, had hastily donned a very unbecoming barege, of the odious color, called *vapeur*, so trying to all, and so disfiguring to a blonde! this dress almost touched the tips of her pretty ears; and her golden hair, which was so becoming and beautiful, in its natural ringlets, was brushed straight across her forehead, *à la Gris*, in a manner most detrimental to her charms.

Miss Jenny, however, kept Lady Beauchamp and Jeannetta in countenance, she was still in the full dress costume she had adopted to preside at Colonel Pevensey's proposal, and the excitement and triumph she had felt in his defeat, still lent a flush to her cheek, a

juvenile elasticity to her step, and a youthful animation to her discourse.

Montfaucon, whose watch, like that of all true lovers, always gained, was very early by Jeannetta's side in Mrs. Orde's drawing-room, but the Baron and the Captain kept the dinner waiting a most unreasonable time, and when they did appear they looked so pale, and were so *distract*, that Mrs. Orde blamed herself for having teased the Captain with a little half playful jealousy—and attributed the Baron's uneasiness, to Rosalie's cruelty.

Rosalie herself, more shrewd, and perhaps more suspicious, fancied there was some far deeper cause, than one which she did not believe would have really affected them at all. She saw, to her great joy, that her aunt was fast becoming the object of the Captain's serious attentions, and having taken care to let the Baron know that Miss Jenny had six hundred a year of her own—she judged him harshly enough, to believe that the obsequious

homage he was paying her, was a preliminary to a transfer of his devotion, from a maiden of eighteen to one of seventy !

Rosalie felt a sort of inexplicable conviction that something of great and mysterious importance, perhaps an affair of *honor*, or to her thinking, *dishonor*, had detained them—and her cheek, grew pale, and her conviction was confirmed, as she remarked a stain of blood on the crumb-cloth, where some water had been spilled, just where the Captain stood, and which taking the shape of the sole of his foot, gave reason to believe that he had been recently treading where the blood had been shed ; when she remarked it, the Captain's face grew livid, and the Baron started and trembled—and then de Creveœur owned that a *rencontre* *had* taken place between himself and a gentleman, who, in a coffee-house, had spoken slightly of some ladies whom, (he added, significantly,) he loved and revered above all others on earth. That they had met on the Downs—the Baron being his second--

that a flesh wound, painful, but not dangerous, had brought the vile traducer of innocence to reason and repentance—and that having bled profusely—he, the Captain, who had hastened to bind up his antagonist's wound, had probably soiled his boot on the blood-stained-turf, which blood had soon been dried by the sun, and would not have left any marks on the cloth, but for the wet, which had moistened the sole of the boot.

Both Mrs. Orde and Lady Beauchamp, each, individually, believing her own name to have been that which the Captain had perilled his life to defend, and her own innocence to be that for the traducing of which he had so punished the traducer, burst into tears at this tale of chivalrous and heroic devotion.

Rosalie felt, as she looked at the stain, a shuddering horror and sinking of the heart, for which she could not account, and even the Captain, generally such a *gourmand*, and the Baron, so celebrated a *gastronome*, though

they drank more than usual, could not muster appetite for any of the dainties Mrs. Orde had provided.

Unable to dissipate the gloom that seemed to settle on all the party, save the Count and Jeannetta, Mrs. Orde proposed that the party should adjourn to the theatre, as Violet was to appear again in the character she so admirably personated, the exquisite Juliet of Shakspeare, and until coffee was ready, and it was time to dress, a walk on the pier was proposed.

“Does any one know how our poor old landlord is to-day,” asked Mrs. Orde, “I have not heard his heavy step on the stairs, returning, as usual, from cheapening a few shrimps for his miserly supper—Rosalie, he is your especial protégé and pet, have you seen him to-day. He has not brought me down the receipt, for the rent I paid him, yesterday—when we come in, send Phœbe up to him

to enquire how he is, and ask for the receipt."

"Oh, I will go myself, after our walk," said Rosalie. "He hates to see any one else; he has told me so; he thinks everybody else wants to rob him. I told you how, last time, he, thinking the door was bolted, actually said 'Come in' to me, before he had locked up an old desk under his pillow, in which were bags of gold, and bundles of notes."

"You do not say so," said Captain Creve-cœur, "what! is it possible that beggarly-looking, half-starved old fellow, has any hoards?"

"Oh, impossible! you must be joking, Miss Rosalie," said the Baron.

"I thought I told you all of my adventure," said Rosalie.

"*Moi pas !*" said the Captain.

"*Ni moi !*" said the Baron.

"Oh, I am sure you were present in person, though perhaps absent in mind," said Rosalie,

laughing. "The fact is, Grimshaw is a regular old miser—just such a one, as one reads of in the 'Eccentric Biography,' a Daniel Dance, or an old Elwes—he has one room at the top of this house—the windows are barred, and the door plated with iron—it has two strong bolts, and a huge lock, two crazy chairs, a small deal table, a wretched flock bed, an old bureau, and an iron chest—this, with a small basket grate, in which he burns a little coke in cold weather, forms all his furniture. I think his memory fails him at times, for when I knocked, he said, 'Come in,' thinking he had locked the door, owing to this mistake I came upon him, just as he was huddling away, under his wretched pillow, a desk, filled as I have described; he told me a long story about the money being a friend's, and that he was counting it over, before giving it up, which he was to do that very evening."

"Perhaps that was true," said the Captain.

"He seemed very low and dejected," added Rosalie.

"Perhaps at having to give up the stewardship of the money," said the Baron.

"I did not believe his story myself," replied Rosalie, "but of course I appeared to do so ...and seeing this, he offered me one of his rickety old chairs...while I paid our rent; he then entered into many details about his poverty, the difficulty he had in making this house answer, and in providing for himself. He told me he felt very ill and low; that in his youth, he had not been a very good or dutiful son; and, therefore, he feared his days would not be long on the earth. He said his father had died mysteriously, and as they had lived on bad terms, and had had words, an enemy had tried to cast suspicion on him, but in vain; he was acquitted by the Coroner's verdict: 'Died by the visitation of God,' but three things disturbed him now; he had either dreamt he saw, or actually seen his father's

ghost ; to dream of his father always foreboded evil to him ; once at sea, after dreaming of his father, the vessel was wrecked, and he was drowned, though restored to life again. Added to this, it was Friday, and he had seen the new moon through the window pane ; he was certain something dreadful would happen to him, and he wished he was dead."

"Just the sort of old fellow to destroy himself," said the Captain.

"Quite an hypochondriac," said the Baron.

"Well," said Rosalie, "I tried all I could to comfort him, and as he really looked very ill, and we were going to tea, I stepped down, and took him up a basin of hot tea, with a little brandy in it, with a muffin and sally-lunn, toasted and buttered, for I really believe, he had scarcely broken his fast. Oh, how he devoured the food, and with what eagerness he drank the tea ! I should have been to see him to-day, only he told me he should be out all the morning ; but when we come in, I shall

run up and see him, and take him some coffee and toast."

"You will be his heiress at this rate, Rosalie," said Mrs. Orde.

"Heiress of his threadbare old spencer, his crazy chairs, flock bed, and basket grate," said the Captain. "I believe he is very poor, and that the money Miss Rosalie saw, was, as he said a trust, which he had to give up, and the parting with which made him so unhappy!... Ladies, shall we walk!"

All set forth, except the Baron De Saint Felix, who expressed a wish to keep Miss Jenny company, and to complete his delightful task, of holding an immense skein of cotton, which she was winding into a ball, to knit garters.

When they were alone the Baron de Saint Felix exchanged his air of playful gallantry for one of tender sorrow—fixed his soft, blue eyes, moistened with one of the large tears

he had *à volonté*, on the face of the stern old spinster, and heaved a deep sigh.

“What! do ye weary already of being useful, Baron?” said Miss Jenny—“if so, gang yer ways, and join the gay party—I’m quite independent of help or company, Baron, and am never less alane, than when alane!”

“Alone!” said the Baron, who began to speak broken English pretty fluently. It is sweet to be alone, but den it must be alone, wid what we love.”

“Alane, quite alane with yoursel’ I suppose you mean, Baron, for no man really loves anything but his ainsel’.”

The Baron looked puzzled; Miss Jenny’s Scotch was too much for him; not being able to get on very well with words, he tried the universal language, pantomime.

He put his hand on his heart, and uttered a loud “Oh!”

“What ails ye, Baron;” said Miss Jenny, are ye bod in yer inside. Eh sir, but you luke

unco pale, the cholera's in Brighton—I'll send for the doctor, spake, what ails ye?"

"No, no—not cholera; worse, oh worse!"

"Worse than cholera," cried Miss Jenny, "spake man, spake. It must be the plague then."

"De plague, yes lady, de plague of all noble hearts, lady," and he seized Miss Jenny's hand, and dropped on one knee, "I love!"

"Weel Baron," said Miss Jenny, "I pity ye but I canna help ye, and wuld na if I could—my niece Rosalie taks after me; she scorns monkind, and prefers a seengle life. I'm sorry for ye, as ye seem less conceited and mair rasonable than maist o' yer inflated, treacherous, pompous sex, but Rosalie—"

"Talk not to me of she," said the Baron; "she is noting to me. I lub, I adore, I worship—"

"Whom?" said Miss Jenny.

"You lady, you; divine, adorable Jenny,"

and he threw himself at her feet, and caught both her hands.

But Miss Jenny, all the blood of the Macphersons rushing to her brow, and all the pride of her immaculate and ancient sisterhood, firing her eyes, rose to a height naturally above that of woman, and much increased by a pair of very high heels, she armed herself with her huge fan, stamped with her quaint embroidered feet, and tossed her powdered head till a little cloud environed her stern and angry face ; she cried in a shrill voice :

“ How dare ye ottempt, ye saucy callant, to play aff ye monkey tricks on a dochter o’ the hoose of Macpherson ; ye’ve chosen ill ye concaited popinjay and bauld upstart in seeking to mak fun o’ me ; Jenny Macpherson wa’ spurned a’ serious attentions at seventeen, is na seventy to be mad the object o’ yer ridicule, ye vile Southron ! ye play actor, ye Kestrel ! ”

“ You tink me make fun, and so you scold

a poor fond boy; but you pity me when I swear it is no joke; I am earnest, I love you; oh, Jenny!"

"Jenny! indeed! hop o' my thumb—unloose my skirt, by the bluid o' my fathers I feel inclined to fell ye wi' my fan: what hae ye seen in me puppet to mak ye presume to act sic an a pantomime as this."

"I have seen beauty, I feel lub and despair. You tink I joke—as I am a Frenchman and a Baron I am earnest.

"I despise you for yer rude unmannerly jest, fellow," said Miss Jenny! but I should loathe you, did I believe you were in earnest."

"I am, you shall be mine, you shall fly wid me—if not..."

"Well if not?"

"Den Despair! but no, no, you will say yes...you will fly to-night; do not frown; chuse, if you say again *no*, I blow out my brain.

As he spoke, he took a pistol from his pocket and held it to his ear.

"Fire, fire," said Miss Jenny scornfully; "there is no fear of your blowing out your brains, for I believe you have none to blow out. But listen, if you are in earnest; if this is not an impertinent piece of buffoonery and a saucy attempt at making me a butt it is worse still; the miserable speculation of a foreign fortune-hunter, who, foiled by the niece of seventeen wishes to ensure himself six hundred a year by making a fool of the great aunt of seventy. If you are driven to this baseness by want, I will supply you."

"I am in no want, angel!" said the Baron. taking handsfull of gold and bank notes from his pocket, or rather I want nothing but pity, and sympathy."

"You want either a straight waistcoat or a horsewhip, boy!" said Miss Jenny.

"Nay then," said Saint Fèlix, "to de proof proud Jenny! You can brave de death of me...now if you will not fly dis moment in dat chaise to London, and be nine, brave death

yourself!" as he spoke he cocked his pistol, and presented it to the withered ear of Miss Jenny.

"Fool," said Miss Jenny firm as a rock; "think you a Macpherson fears to die. Fire if ye dare, and then the laws will rid the world of a fool or a knave!"

"No, no, I cannot harm you," said the Baron, putting up his pistol—"Forgive me—let us be friend if nothing more!"

"No, sir," said Miss Jenny, "I sit in the same room with you na' mair, if this was a trick, it is an impertinence that deserves the horsewhip, had I only a male relative to admeenester the chastisement you sa weel deserve. If it was an earnest and interested wish, to wed yer five-and-twenty years of idle, wicked folly, to my seventy winters of wisdom and discretion, and that from a mean desire after my puir little fortune, seeking to mak the savings of mony generations of high-born but

thirfty Scotch lairds supply the lavish and boyish extravagances of a southron dandy, and a French adventurer...then are you unworthy to sit in the presence of ony but the meanest and most dishonest of hucksters, and of all of them, you will be the maist degraded, for the barter you wish to effect is the meanest. Now ye have heard my last word, mak what excuse you can but gang yer ways, as either a saucy whipster baulked of his impudent laugh at wrinkles and grey hairs, or as a paltry, mean-spirited little huckster, who would barter his little paltry Tom Thumb-of-a-person for the auld Scotchspinster'spuir sax-hoondred a-year! Gang yer ways! and instead o' laughing at my folly as ye seem to have expectit—fret like a whipped bairn over yer ain, and tear your flaxen, doll-like curls, and bite yer pretty whiskered lips for vary shame and spite at yer detection and defeat...Gang!" cried the angry old lady, seeing he did not move, "gang, or

it'll be the waur for ye, or for ony ither popinjay wha' daurs to treeble wi the last dochter o' the Hoose o' Macpherson when the bluid o' her ancestors boils in her veins! and the speerit o' her forefathers stirs in her bosom!"

So excited, and so belligerent were the air and countenance of the irate and gigantic old spinster as she rose from her seat, that the little Baron feared for his beauty, if not for his life, and hastily darted from the room.

Miss Jenny, with the air and the feelings of a conqueror, sat down breathless and flushed, fanning herself violently. Before she had recovered her composure the whole party returned from the Chain-pier. To every enquiry after the Baron, Miss Jenny Macpherson replied with evasive but mysterious significance, a haughty toss of the head, and an angry flash of her still keen grey eye.

Tea and coffee came, but the Baron de Saint

Felix came not, and the Captain began to appear uneasy at his absence, and seemed to associate it in some degree with the late affair on the Downs.

Rosalie, true to her amiable promise to the wretched old miser, and as usual president of the tea and coffee table, called for a tray, on which she placed a basin of hot coffee, and a plate of toast, adding, at her mother's suggestion, a poached egg and some broiled ham... Phoebe attended her, to carry the tray upstairs, but Rosalie would not offend the poor old recluse by letting any one but herself enter his apartment. Having sent Phoebe for some salt, which had been forgotten, she placed the tray on an old chest on the landing and knocked at the door, gently at first, but receiving no answer, louder and louder; as this was still in vain, Rosalie tried the door—to her surprise it was not fastened, she opened it gently, the room was dark, for an old black

garment of the miser's was fastened to the iron bars of the window...a rich flood of the light of the setting sun poured in at the open door and fell full on the curtainless bed, where lay, what one glance of horror unspeakable, informed Rosalie, was the lifeless and murdered body of the old man! From a gaping wound in his throat the blood had welled profusely, and the hand that had done the deed would seem to have been his own! for an old clasp-knife, newly sharpened, was in his blood-stained fingers. Rosalie, when the conviction of what had occurred rushed upon her mind, as the sun illumined the ghastly picture, uttered a loud and piercing shriek, that was heard in the drawing-room, and sunk perfectly insensible on the floor by the bed-side, where a pool of blood was formed by a stream that trickled from the wretched bed.

The party at tea below, alarmed by the shrill scream of ineffable horror which Rosalie had

uttered, rushed upstairs—The Captain seemed unwilling to be of the party, declaring himself of a constitution unequal to enduring sudden shocks, and that if, as he feared the old man had died of some fit, and was lying dead in his bed, he had rather not see the corpse, because he always was subject to faint, at the sight of death since he had found his beloved grandfather and grandmother dead in their arm-chairs!

Lady Beauchamp and Mrs. Orde, however, would hear of no excuse; Jeannetta and the Count had already rushed up-stairs, and the two ladies compelled the unwilling Captain to escort them.

His excuse, however, proved to be no pretence, for at the first glimpse he caught of the poor old man, so lean and care-worn, his grey hairs clotted with blood, and the knife clasped in his almost skeleton hand, he turned sick and faint, and but for the Count de Montfaucon would, like Rosalie, have sunk on the floor.

The Count supported him to the landing, and opened the window, and then he returned to assist the ladies in removing Rosalie.

“It is evident,” he said, “that the unhappy old man has died by his own hand; but of course a coroner’s inquest will sit upon the body; and in the meantime we must send for a surgeon—and leave everything just as it is. Come, ladies, this is no scene for you; I will go for a medical man myself, if you will return to your own apartments, and try to quiet your nerves, and compose your minds.”

But Jeannnetta clung to the Count, and would not let him leave her. All women who love, fancy there is, in scenes of peril or of horror, no protection, no safety, but in the presence of the beloved; and so Captain Creve-cœur was sent for the doctor, and the Count remained with the ladies.

The doctor arrived promptly; but the Captain did not accompany him. He sent word

by the servant who had attended him, that his nerves required some hours' quiet, in the open air, after the shock he had received.

The doctor pronounced that life had been for some hours extinct. He declined saying any more until a coroner's inquest had sate upon the body; but there was a something mysterious and suspicious in his manner, which filled our party with alarm. Rosalie had recovered from her swoon, but was still very unwell from the shock she had received. The Baron de Saint Felix did not re-appear; and the Captain did not return till late, when he joined the rest of the family, whom a shivering sense of horror had determined to sit up together all night in the drawing-room; while Mrs. Orde watched and tended Rosalie on a distant sofa, the Captain and Lady Beauchamp conversed together in the embrasure of the window, a good deal concealed by its drapery; and Jeannetta and her intended sate

enthroned in a nook of their own—her beautiful head on her lover's shoulder, his arm round her waist, whispering all those impassioned, egotistical and tautological extravagancies, which form, in reality, the boasted, over rated eloquence of love.

Even the horrible event of the day, though it had shocked and terrified them, could not engross them long. The sight of blood and death reminding Jeannetta how sudden may be the doom of what we love—how easy it is to die, and yet how horrid and how ghastly is a violent death—made her cling with more passionate tenderness to her Gonzalve; she drew his hand to her heart, as though to keep him with her, by the knowledge that its every throb was his, and the intensity of her devotion lent a new and enthralling power to her beauty, which increased the Count's passion almost to idolatry.

It was evident to all but the absorbed Jean-

netta that some great cause of anger and annoyance had arisen between the Count and the Captain, and that it was the Count who considered himself the aggrieved and injured party. He treated Crevecœur with the most sovereign contempt, and even rudeness, and looked at him with an expression of angry scorn; while the ladies were surprised to see so brave an officer, as they believed the Captain to be, tolerate this so patiently!

The Captain on the other hand seemed anxious to conciliate the Count, and tried, on several occasions, to enter into conversation with him, but in vain. This state of affairs between their beaux added to the general discomfort of the party; and Mrs. Orde determined as soon as the inquest had been held on the wretched Grimshaw, to quit Brighton for London. While the hours are moving on leaden wings for all but the lovers, we will leave them for a little while

to enquire how the haughty Colonel Pevensey endures the mortification he has undergone, and what are his feelings in his new, and to him most extraordinary situation, as a rejected suitor.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DISCOVERY.

THE Honourable Colonel Pevensey, however much he might draw himself up, and however haughty and contemptuous he might look as he quitted the scene of his disgrace and his defeat, felt very much like a conquered monarch, and was lowered in his own esteem to a degree, astonishing even to himself! For the first time in his life, he began to examine his real claims to that universal admiration, (nay adoration,) of

womankind, which it had been his fortune to excite, and a very unpleasant suspicion that his age had something to do with his present astounding failure, made him consider, for the first time, that he, like all men past five and thirty, might be considered middle-aged by a girl yet in her teens; and must ere long be acknowledged such by all the world, and worse still by himself! The ill-humour in which he had left the Ordes' house, was not at all diminished by this discovery, and the impossibility of concealing Jeannetta's mortifying refusal from his toady Symons, added to his rage and discomfort.

Had he been very sincerely or deeply in love, he would probably have determined not so easily to resign the object of his affections—a man who really loves can hardly be persuaded not to hope, but the admiration and preference Jeannetta had awakened, had been so much the result of the imaginary passion for him, which Symons had induced Colonel Pevensey

to attribute to her—the idea of her secret idolatry and rash but romantic devotion, had heightened her every charm in his proud heart! Now that he discovered she did not even admire him, he began to suspect she had wilfully deceived for the glory of rejecting him. A positive dislike to the first woman, who had ever mortified his pride, sprang up in his vain heart, a dislike which a very little would have ripened into positive hatred.

Symons, who was pretty well aware how the haughty Colonel's offer would be made to, and how it would be received by, the proud Jeanetta, was not inclined to encounter the rejected suitor, in the first hours of his anger and his mortification, and it was a great relief to Colonel Pevensey to find a note from him, announcing the sudden illness of a brother and begging him to excuse his setting off to see him at once.

The sight of his lovely children watching

for him, to thank him with fond words and warm caresses for his beautiful gifts, succeeded better than anything else could have done in soothing his wounded pride and irritated temper (his heart had in reality little to do in the affair.) As he threw himself on a couch, Clarissa timidly brought a stool to his side, and fondly kissed his hand, and Marmaduke boldly sprang upon the sofa, and threw his arms round his father's neck.

Clarissa's soft eyes were full of tears of filial tenderness and gratitude, as she took her pretty little watch out of her fair young bosom, and held it up to her father, that he might see how beautiful it looked, and how well it kept time.

The boy, on the contrary, full of noisy joy, began, "Now papa do you want to know exactly what o'clock it is; I can always tell you to a minute—your old watch papa, cannot be half so good as mine. Mine is better finished than Clarissa's, though hers is smartest

outside. Symons says he thinks mine has rather the best works, and Wilson says it goes on diamonds, and Clarissa's only on rubies. It is very well for a girl to have jewels outside; but a boy, you know papa, does not wear a watch as an ornament, he wants one that never loses or gains a moment—a girl's time is of no value, but a boy's you know papa—"

"Oh, but Marmaduke!" said the sweet little girl, "I do want to know exactly what o'clock, it is, for if my time is of no value I always want to know when it is exactly nine o'clock that I may go into my own darling papa's dressing-room, and when it is one, and he will come and play with us before our dinner, and when it is eight and he will come and see us in bed, and now I can always know without teasing Nurse or Mary; so you see, dear Marmaduke, I do want my watch to go well, as much as you do."

"Oh, no! that is all nonsense, isn't it papa?—but it does matter, when Mr. Lamotte comes to teach me to ride, that he should not keep me a minute waiting, and that Wilson

should bring my pony to the door exactly at twelve—and that my tutor should come at nine, so that I may have done at twelve.”

“ Oh,” said the girl in her humbler, and less selfish nature, “ it is important, Marmy, that you should be ready for Mr. Lamotte—and still more for Mr. Darwin, and not keep them waiting—but your waiting a little is not of so much consequence.”

“ Yes, but it is, of a great deal more, for I am a gentleman, and my papa is the Honourable Colonel Pevensey, and my uncle is Lord Chester, and papa will be a nobleman some day, and so shall I—and Mr. Lamotte is only a riding master, and Mr. Darwin a tutor, and they are paid for coming, and they ought to come to a moment, and they shall, now I’ve got a watch !”

“ Ah, but Marmy, sometimes Mr. Lamotte is late, because he cannot leave his poor little sick boy—and then Mr. Darwin has such a naughty pupil before he comes to you, he

wants a little rest and breakfast, and if he is a little late, you must not seem to notice it. Think how hard he works, to keep his poor old mother like a lady—one day he was late, because she would not take any breakfast, unless he breakfasted with her, and she is so very old!"

" Ah! I forgot all that...Well, I won't be too strict with Mr. Lamotte, because of the little cripple, nor with Mr. Darwin, because of his poor old mother, but I'll take care, now I've got this beautiful watch, always to be ready myself—and not to lose any time..."

" Except in looking at your watch," laughed Clarissa, " but you're a dear, good Marmy, for minding what I say! Isn't he, darling papa?"

" Yes," said the papa, who had listened with deep, though hidden interest, to the conversation. " Marmaduke is a noble boy, for determining to make such good use of his watch, and you are a dear, good girl, for

advising him so wisely and so well—and now, kiss me, my angels, and tell me what o'clock it is—for I think it is time for you to take your evening walk.”

Luckily both watches tallied to a moment, and as it was the very hour for the walk, Colonel Pevensey, with many a fond embrace, dismissed his darlings, and after they were gone, he said to himself:

“Perhaps that saucy nobody might have proved a very step-mother to those treasures! I have made a fool of myself, certainly, and I deserve the ridicule I shall have brought upon myself; but one real tear from Clarissa, or one reproach from Marmaduke, if their new mamma made them less happy than now, would affect me more than all the *persiflage*, of all the titled coquettes at Almack's, and all the jests, puns, and quibbles, of all the wits about town. I am sure she is a vixen—how her colour rose, and how her eyes flashed!—fancy my setting a vixen step-mother over my

gentle, fond, meek-spirited Clarissa, and my proud, noble-hearted, but petulant boy!

“ Artful too she must be, most artful, thus to have led me on! Perhaps, after all, she wants me to propose again, in a manner more suited to her absurd pride, and the ridiculous, old-fashioned pomposity, of her absurd old man-hater of a great-aunt—but I’ve had a narrow escape, or, rather, my darlings have, I believe, and I’ll never peril their happiness again. They suffice to make my home sweet to me, and in a few years (nine or ten,) Clarissa will be able to do the honours of my house, as none but a Pevensey-born could do them; and Marmaduke will be a companion and a friend for me by that time, and as he evidently inherits the pride and spirit of his ancestors, so, I hope, will he equal them in intellect, and in elegance of manners—the worst of it, is Symons’ knowing it—it’s a great relief, his being away for a day or two—and now I’ll to the theatre, for that clever and pretty little

Violante Woodhurst makes an exquisite Juliet—and seems to play to me—as the patron of the whole theatrical establishment I presume—I wish I knew that girl's history—there is something so thorough-bred and so refined in her beauty, her voice, and her manners, that I cannot believe her to be the obscure adventuress her position here would proclaim her!—yet I think Symons told me, something about her having a brother or a cousin, a private in the regiment!—wonderful if she is so meanly connected—for she's one of nature's gentlewomen—and if I'm not much mistaken, she's a really good girl, though she is an actress, and a lady by birth, though a vagabond by profession!”

Never had Violet so bewitchingly realized that Psyche of the drama—the adoring, the adored, and adorable Juliet of Shakspeare, as she did this evening;...The house was full—the commonest people appreciate a really fine and true delineation of nature, even in its

most poetical form—and the delicate, blue eyed sylph, (long before the autocrats of the drama, and the princes and nobles of the land, had proclaimed her unrivalled,) was popular among the townspeople and working-classes of Brighton—and looked upon with the sort of admiring tenderness, which the roughest natures sometimes entertain for the brightest and softest among womankind. It was strange to see that, however any other attraction might thin the dress circle and the private boxes—Viola's charms and talents alone, always filled the pit and the galleries.

On the evening in question a public ball drew away many of our young heroine's admirers, among the nobility, the military, and the gentry. It was not therefore the consciousness of a fashionable and overflowing house of grandees that gave such a life and spirit to her performance. Her humble patrons attributed her evident inspiration and beautiful energy to gratitude for their support, and

they applauded her (men and women too) with the warmth and zeal of their unrestrained and enthusiastic class! But to Colonel Pevensey, seated in his private box—shrouded from public view by a curtain, but perfectly apparent to Violet's, it was evident (or at least it would have been evident, before his severe lesson of the morning) that it was *his* presence that called forth all the young actress's best powers—it was to *his* admiring and noble countenance, her own inspired and enchanting face was turned!—it was his gentle and dignified applause (conveyed by the softest patting of his white kid gloves—not the uproarious praise of the many) that made her cheek glow, her bosom heave, and her whole frame tremble with gratified emotion.

Many were the flowers and *bouquets* flung at the feet of Violet, when her noisy patrons compelled her to appear before the curtain, and she did so, led by the pleased and triumphant manager.

The liveried attendants gathered these tributes up for her in baskets—all but one, which had fallen at her feet, and which she herself picked up, with a curtsy, to the house, but with a timid glance at Colonel Pevensy's box, raised it to her lips, and placed it in her bosom. This was a sprig of myrtle the Colonel had worn, and which being the only tribute of the kind he had about him, he, in the enthusiasm of the moment, flung at poor Violet's feet.

How little, as he threw it in half playful admiration of one he looked upon almost as a gifted child, how little did he deem what a source of dangerous and passionate delight that tribute would be to that enthusiastic and gifted girl! What kisses, what tears would be lavished upon it—how it would be planted, tended, watched...how protracted were the hopes that it would take root...how inadmissible the conviction that it must die!...how superstitious the despair brought by the certainty that it was dying...dead!...and how

much like a devotee's worship of a sainted relic, was Violet's impassioned treasuring up of its withered stalk and shrivelled leaves.

"I should think that poor and beautiful child, silly enough to have fallen in love with me," thought Pevensey, as he drew his cloak around him, and returned home, with folded arms and thoughtful brow. "But Jeannetta Orde and the old spinster man-hater have taught me a distrust in such matters, new to my vanity, and humbling to my pride. If I am too old to be loved by the stately, full-grown Jeannetta, I must be antiquated indeed, in the eyes of that sweet child, who seems yet in her earliest teens. That handsome young soldier in the pit, whose whole soul was in his eyes as he gazed upon her, and who was taken ill, and carried out, at the close of the performance, is much more likely to be the object of the passion that evidently animates her performance, than the haughty, middle aged aristocrat, whom she may wish to conciliate as

a patron and a critic, but can never dream of loving as man! I must inquire about that young fellow. If the girl loves him, it is a thousand pities his fortunes should be so far beneath his own appearance and her deserts!"

Thus musing, the Colonel returned to his own house, and paid his customary visit to the chambers of his sleeping darlings; and as he gazed upon the happy smiles so habitual to them, that even in sleep their sweet faces wore them still, he consoled himself again for the deep wound Jeannetta had inflicted on his vanity and self-love, by a conviction that a step-mother (with the spirit and resolution she had betrayed) would probably have robbed these young hearts of half their happy confidence and careless glee—have either felt herself or infused into their spirits the poison of jealousy...have clouded their bright dawn of life, and perhaps...had she gained much on his affections herself, or brought him children who did...have deprived them of that entire and

exclusive fondness, the loss or diminution of which now, would break his Clarissa's loving heart, and embitter his boy's noble spirit.

With these reflections Colonel Pevensey consoled himself, as he paced up and down his drawing-room and looked out upon the moonlit sea, and the clear azure of the sky.

There is something very soothing to the spirit, and very softening to the heart in a moon-light scene, and particularly when that silvery and spiritualized light is mirrored and extended by a large expanse of water—What touching memories of the Past, what soft and yet thrilling emotions in the Present, and what wild and inspiring anticipations for the Future fill the heart and mind of any susceptible being, who looks out from 'chambered loneliness' on the moonlit sea. In those silver masses of light, and those sudden depths of shadow, how much of poetic mystery, unknown to garish day, appears to lurk!—The Moon is not much

associated with our childhood; for in earliest life, happy slumbers shut us out from her sweet but melancholy influence—It is in the first delicious dawn of youth, (and it may be of passion,) that we first learn to love the Moon—“Sun of the Sleepless”...and oh! how much dearer than the sweetest sleep is the first vigil of the awakened heart...When alone with the moon, and the first delicious memories of Passion, the young votary of Love and Sorrow, counts his rosary by that silver lamp, (a rosary whose beads are those gems of young affection, the timid, stealthy glance, the tear, the trembling touch, the first shy, hurried kiss, the impassioned vow, the ardent word, the fervent prayer!) How those old days of wild enchantment come back upon our hearts, as through tearful eyes we watch that self-same Moon, the Moon who lighted us to the cold shrine of the false idol...who smiled on our wild hopes, and passionate vigils there, and who lights us still to the ruined shrine and uprooted image of clay

—smiling on our disappointment, it may be on our despair! And how is a moonlit watch crowded, thronged, not only with the memories of disappointed love...and all love *is* disappointed —(Disappointed if crossed, more disappointed if successful!) but all the ghosts of the Past visit us with “the glimpses of the ‘Moon’” —The early friends, the companions of school, or of sport—once all the world to us! and now changed, or dead, or far away, or such cold, common-place acquaintance they are nothing to our hearts! And the dear, dear parents! who so loved us! and whom now, perhaps, we love as the lost, and the unforgotten alone are loved—and all who sympathised with us in our early aspirations, all we ever loved and cherished, come back with the moon more loved and more regretted, all we ever hated or wronged come back, and we repent us (how vainly now!) of that hate and of that wrong—Armies of the dead seem to live again in one long moonlight vigil—Dead love, dead friend—

ships, dead affections, dead hopes—regret, repentance, remorse, and despair—all live again in their minutest details as we study the pages of the Past “by the soft sepulchral light,” “of the silver lamp of night!”

And while Colonel Pevensey stood at the open window, and all the pale spectres of the old Time moved in sad procession in the moonbeams before him, and old affections, and old hopes, and old disappointments filled his eyes with tears, and his heart with soft emotions—a slight but dark figure suddenly emerging from a deep shadow, and moving rapidly across the quiet light, drew him from the melancholy, tranquil Past, and sent the colour to his brow, the flash to his eye, and the throb to his heart! For he looked upon the same slight, graceful figure, Symons had pointed out to him the night before, and the Colonel felt convinced, in spite of her haughty rejection of the morning, and all the bitterness of her scorn, and the mortification she had taught him, that the shrouded

female, watching his windows at that late hour, as a devotee watches at the shrine of a saint, was no other than the imperious, cold, and queen-like rejecter of his offers—Jeannetta Orde!

This time there were no scruples, and no Symons to detain him, and revenge and resentment had more to do than love, with the haste with which he seized his cap and cloak, and hurried out into the moonlight.

For some time, he hurried so stealthily along in the shadow of the tall houses, forming the Marine Parade, that the lady seemed unaware of his approach, and repeatedly turned in the moonlight to watch his house, and even rested occasionally, against the railing that fronted the sea.

But no sooner did he appear in the moonlight, evidently in pursuit of her, than she sped like a frightened fawn away, away—and with a fleetness that compelled Colonel Pevensey to exert himself, in a manner very unusual

with him, to keep her in sight at all—the lady continued to fly, and the Colonel to follow, gaining but little upon her, until they came where the houses were thinner, and at greater intervals, and at last into the open country—and here the Colonel was almost determining, in humanity to the terrified and wearied girl, to give up the chase, when she suddenly struck her foot against a stone, and fell prostrate in the road.

Of this accident the Colonel availed himself, and as, though she contrived to raise and seat herself on a grass bank by the road side, it was evident she was too much hurt to run, or even walk, the Colonel was soon by her side.

Her bonnet, veil, dress, and mantle, were all black—and as he drew near, she turned away, and hid her face in her hands.

“I hope you are not seriously hurt, sweetest and dearest one!” said the Colonel, gently attempting to take her hand, seating himself

beside her, and trying to draw her towards him!...“Look at me, my love! Come, you owe me some atonement for the anguish you have caused me—is it such a pleasure to sport with your own feelings and mine, dearest!... and are you so rash, as to risk my love in the morning, and your own fair fame at night?... speak, are you ill?...Good God! are those sobs!...I must see you!”

As he spoke, with a gentle force, he removed the bonnet and veil, he unclasped the fair hands...and the light of the moon fell on the back of the Grecian head, and twisted golden braids, and the slender, swan-like throat of Violet, whose face sank on his knee, as she tried to hide her features in his military cloak.

Colonel Pevensey, who had had no doubt, that in removing the bonnet and veil, he should discover the Juno-like head—the jet-black hair—and fine, but full-sized throat of Jeannetta Orde—was for a moment silent in utter amazement!...During that silence, many thoughts

were rushing through his mind. Those beautiful, eloquent, and impassioned letters—those romantic and devoted vigils, which had led him to the haughty Jeannetta—they sprang then from the wild and devoted passion of this gifted and beautiful girl!

And what was he to do with all this tenderness, this idolatry—Colonel Pevensey was a man of the world, but not in the worst sense of the term—and therefore he was at a loss how to act and what to say.

“You are disappointed,” at length said Violet, mournfully, her woman instinct leading her thus to construe his silence—“You thought it was another—but I never meant to deceive you—I tried all I could to escape you, and I meant never to watch your windows again, after this one night!”

As she spoke in sad and humble deprecation of his wrath, she turned her beautiful face towards him, and as the moonlight fell on its fair and exquisite young features, and the tears

that trembled in her violet eyes, the Colonel felt that, in order to keep his first manly resolution, of not destroying her because she loved him, he must not look into those eyes, or on that face again.

"Sweet Violet," he said, "anger and disappointment have nothing to do with the silence that distresses you—I did believe I should look on another face certainly, but not on a fairer, believe me!—the exquisite letters, and the beautiful, but rash marks of interest, you have honoured me with, attributed by me to another, had inspired me with an admiration for that other, which——"

"Oh, I know, I know it all," said Violet. "You believed, because you wished to believe it, that the beautiful Jeannetta Orde alone, had a heart and mind capable of appreciating yours—and you love her—and you despise the rash—the weak—the humble——"

Tears choked her voice.

The Colonel forgot his good and generous

resolves. He took her hands, and said, "No, Violet you wrong me. Your soft and Psyche-like beauty is more, far more to my taste than the Juno charms of Miss Orde. If my imagination has been captivated by her, it is because I invested her with that exquisite genius, and that sweet, rash, feminine devotion which it seems are yours, sweet Violet, and not hers! I am almost afraid to own to myself and to you what the effect will be, of my admitting the conviction that those enchanting letters were traced by this hand, and that it is this delicate and trembling form I have seen watching the windows of my poor home!"

"Why should you be afraid (timidly asked poor Violet) to feel for me the interest you began to feel for Jeannetta, when you thought she...valued you as I do?"

Colonel Pevensey could not find it in his heart to explain to the poor girl that he could make Miss Orde his wife, and the mother of his darlings, but that his pride revolted at the idea

of raising to that dignity, the humble, obscure actress of a provincial theatre, however bright her genius, however spotless her character, however exquisite her beauty, and however perfect her devotion !

A silence of a few minutes succeeded to Violet's simple question ; a variety of thoughts and feelings kept Colonel Pevensey silent ; and good, and bad resolutions rapidly flitted across his worldly mind. He believed Violet to be spotless in conduct and passionately in love with himself ; and this passion he had no doubt would keep her, even in her perilous situation, for a time at least, safe from all meaner and coarser snares. But of the child-like purity of the wild love she felt for him, he was incapable of forming any conception, the question in his mind was, whether he should affect a sternness he did not feel, and save her from herself and him, or whether he should meet with fondness, if not with love, the passion of this beautiful and bewitching creature, and as in

his worldly code it was certain that sooner or later she must fall, whether he should not avail himself of his own good fortune in having inspired such devotion and bear her to some lovely home, where Love, as long as it lasted, should link their hearts together.

“It is better she should be mine, loving me thus (thought the man of the world) than fall a prey, unprotected and defenceless as she is, to some titled brute or some villain in her own degraded class. If I fling her off, her wounded heart must attach itself to something, and if she is true to me I will secure her from want, a moderate annuity will do that—but she may endear herself so much to me as to become necessary to my happiness. She may have children whom I shall love, and then I will always keep her in an elegant home, and supply her handsomely in every way, and this will be surely better than her present laborious and ill-paid profession.”

He looked into Violet's face, as he came to this worldly decision—the moonlit streamed full upon it. Her eyes were raised to his, but the feeling he read in them was so much like the adoration some saint might inspire, that he felt ashamed of his own cold and calculating worldliness, and he looked with tender pity upon her, as he decided in his own mind that it would be best and wisest to drive her from him for ever.

“How is all this to end, my sweet one?” he said at length, almost unconsciously putting back her beautiful hair, and touching with a soft and almost timid kiss her fair and open forehead. To him that gentle kiss, almost such as he might have impressed on his *Clarissa's* forehead was nothing, but to Violet it was the first kiss of him she loved with all the passionate fervor of genius, of youth, and of the peculiar devotion of her character.

For a moment the colour forsook her lips and cheeks, her eyes closed, the hand he held

grew damp and chill in his own, her head sunk on his breast, and, in the intensity of her emotion, consciousness forsook her ! Oh Love ! Love !

The vanity of man gratified by this strange tribute to his power, this wild proof of, as he thought, all absorbing passion, supplied the place of love, and Pevensey caught her to his bosom and his passionate embrace recalled her to herself.

In his coarser nature he had again mistaken her, and if his first timid kiss, so pure, so holy, so all her virgin fancy had conceived of him she adored, had filled her heart with an ecstasy too subtle and too powerful for her delicate frame, the warm embrace of commonplace passion frightened and offended her, and to Colonel Pevensey's surprise, she angrily insisted on his releasing, and haughtily desired him to leave her.

“ Most incomprehensible, and most bewitching of little girls ! ” he said, half piqued at this

repulse. "How have I been so unfortunate as to offend you...Am I to love you, or am I not...and how, as I said before, is all this to end?"

"To love me!...Oh, Colonel Pevensey, there is no love that is not based on the most delicate respect, and the most entire esteem—It is thus I love you, and thus alone would I be loved by you...Do not make me fear for one moment, that there is aught of clay in the idol my heart has enshrined! So pure, so noble, so exalted, so refined, and so intellectual have you seemed to me, that to love you seems like loving an angel not a man."

"Alas! dear girl," said the Colonel, "you love not me, but some being of your own romantic fancy, whom you are pleased to invest with my poor form; I am not only a man, my child, but that most common-place of men, a man of the world—I adore your beauty, I admire your genius, I am gratified by your preference; but I am a thing of vanity, and of

passion, of experience, and of calculation—and, therefore, I say how is all this to end?"

"To end!—it can never end but with my life. You are so generous, so noble, you think my love for you may injure me, and you seek to disenchant me—you pretend to be coarse, common-place, heartless—of this earth—earthy—to save me from a love which may expose me to ridicule or scorn; but your heavenly eyes deny the common-places of your lips, and while your words would prove you so cold, and mean a man, your looks, untutored, proclaim you an angel still."

"My poor, poor child," said Colonel Pevensy, mournfully, "some few years hence, when you know this world a little better, you will smile at the girlish romance you now look upon as a sober reality. There can be no intercourse such as that you describe, between man and woman in this world, and least of all can such exist between you and me."

"Oh, do not say so," said Violet, throwing

herself on her knees before him, and hiding her face on his knee. "Can you not meet me at early dawn, before the prying, busy, gossiping world is awake, and can we not roam hand in hand by the wild sea and watch the sun rise, and gild the waves, like love illumining our path of life...and shall I not make you a bower in the cliffs, and store my basket with a breakfast, love shall make delicious—my hands shall kindle the fire, my hands prepare your coffee, my hands alone shall wait upon and tend you, and then you shall return to your duties, and I to mine—and sometimes you shall come and sit with me in my little room and read to me, and teach me from your own refined and gifted mind how to embody the loveliest conceptions of Shakspeare, and how to win renown and, perhaps, immortality! and then you will come to the theatre and encourage your poor pupil, and were thousands present, to me there would be but one—and the sight of your noble face shining on me will change

a life of monotonous toil into one of perpetual and inspiring delight...and then, when all is hushed, and none are awake but lovers, and the moon comes out to light them to their rendezvous, we will meet as we have met to-night, and sit together by the sea, and I will tell you all I have thought by day and dreamt by night—as you will me—and then we will part to meet again at dawn and roam to our bower in the cliffs!”

How often as the young enthusiast spoke, her colour rising, her bosom heaving, and the water sparkling in her eyes, a smile half of pity, half of scorn wreathed the Colonel’s lip—What an Arcadian Shepherd would the girl make of a middle-aged Colonel, a man of fashion, of pleasure, of the world!—To meet her at dawn to breakfast in the cliffs!!—to sit in her little room, and then steal out at night to sit by the sea—Had he, like Violet, but counted eighteen summers, he might have been rash enough to embark on this voyage of love

and romance, but as it was, though he liked to listen to her fond scheming, he felt sometimes almost nettled at being associated, even in fancy, with such girlish folly.

“ And when winter comes, sweet Violet,” he said; “ and come it will, what then becomes of bowers in the cliff, and siestas by the sea—”

“ Oh there is no winter in the heart, and storms without, will make our bower in the cliffs a sweeter shelter—but if you do not think so, there is my little fire-side, and my love, which will make a summer everywhere—say you like the prospect...say it need not end...say—”

“ Like Romeo, I can only say good night,

“ ‘ Though parting is such sweet sorrow
That I could say good night until ‘twere morrow !’

But rise, sweet Violet, and let me see you home....and to-morrow, we will talk of these things again !”

“ Oh yes, to-morrow; would to-morrow

were already here! When and where shall we meet."

"You shall hear from me, dearest!"

Hear from him!—Oh the rapture, the ecstasy of possessing a letter, written by him, and addressed to her! Here was an inlet to new joy.—Here was something to live for—to hope for to dream of, to ponder on!—

He gave her his arm—he held her hand in his—she moved by his side, too blest for words, though now and then, 'dearest! kindest! best!' escaped her lips—and once she raised his hand to her lips—and he felt that there were tears on her cheeks!—

Oh could she have looked into his heart! Could she have seen the curious mixture of vanity, tenderness, admiration, scorn, anger, impatience, that possessed it;—Could she have understood his struggle, between the generosity, which almost prompted him to make her his wife, the worldly sensuality which urged him to propose to her to be his

mistress, and the common sense and honor, which almost impelled him to shun her for ever—would she have adored, have worshipped him thus!—

The walk home, which seemed but one delicious moment to her, was not without its charm to him. Her beauty, her grace, her eloquence, intellect and *naïveté*—amused him, her admiration, gratified his vanity, and her devotion touched his heart...but at thirty-seven, love is not the omnipotent deity he is at twenty...and the last thought of Colonel Pevensey, connected with Violet, as he laid his head on his pillow was...the common-place one “that it would not do—and that he must put a stop to it.”

He was too old and too experienced—too much a man of the world, and of pleasure *pour filer le parfait amour* at her feet, and play Nemorin to her Estelle—she was not fit to be his wife, and too good and too pure to be

his Mistress...and so there must be an end to it, and he must write and say so.

Thus did he dismiss her image from his thoughts...and she, the while, was praying for him with weeping eyes, recalling his every look, word, and tone, and at length fell asleep with the delightful remembrance that he had promised to write to her—and she, oh, how she hoped she might sleep till that promise was fulfilled, and his letter came!

Poor child! Poor child!—

Absorbed in her own emotions, and engrossed by his presence, Violet did not know that on her way home she had been seen and watched, by one who saw but her on earth, and whose life was one vigil for her sake!...

The young private, whose emotion at the death-scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, as personated by Violet, had caused him to faint away and to be carried out of the theatre insensible, was,

as the reader has probably anticipated, that devoted cousin whose love for Violet had sent him from home in search of her, and exposed him to that extremity of distress and famine in which he had easily fallen a prey to the recruiting serjeant. He went to the theatre to endeavor, in listening to a play associated with early memories of love and happiness, to shake off a little of the intense dejection with which disappointed affection and the monotonous and degrading drudgery of his life as a private in, so severely disciplined a regiment, overwhelmed his spirit...There for the first time he saw Violet, since she had left her home—saw her with all the advantages of dress—of stage effect...of conscious genius and acknowledged popularity...and under the influence of a passion which with her, was an inspiration, and made her seem the very Juliet of the poet, warm and palpitating with life.

He watched her through every scene with absorbing and increasing rapture ; and in the

last, the reality she gave to the death of Juliet caused such a sudden revulsion in his heart that he fell back, as we have said, insensible, and was carried out. Violet, engrossed entirely by Colonel Pevensey's presence, had not seen him; nor was she aware that he had found out her abode...had watched her out and in... and that while she lay dreaming of Pevensey he was walking, maddened by jealousy, and fevered by despair, up and down the little street she dwelt in, and dark thoughts of murder and suicide moving across his fevered brain.

CHAPTER V.

THE VERDICT

THE Coroner's Inquest sate upon the body of the old miser. The investigation was long and minute. Rosalie's evidence was given, and accounted for the fact that the strong box, in which she had seen so many bags of gold and rolls of bank notes, was empty. The amount which Mrs. Orde had paid to Grimshaw the night before, was in his desk; and large

sums of money were found in his wretched pillow, his miserable mattress, and in the private drawers of his antique bureau.

Rosalie's was almost the only evidence of importance; for she alone had had any recent conversation with the deceased. One of the servants of the house deposed to her having met him on the stairs, and to his having appeared more than usually sullen and morose; and the Count's man servant, Sylvio, swore to having opened the door to an elderly man of respectable appearance, who went straight to the miser's room, and shortly after, Sylvio asserted that he opened the street door to the same man carrying a carpet bag.

This confirmed the miser's statement (as repeated to Rosalie) that the owner of the money she found him counting over, was coming to claim it, and her account of his despondency and fatal forebodings, together with his probable anguish at giving up so large

a sum, after possessing it so long, determined the verdict ; although an expression of doubt and of dissatisfaction still darkened the surgeon's countenance.

The verdict was...that " THE DECEASED, A MAN OF ECCENTRIC, SECLUDED, AND MOST PARSIMONIOUS HABITS, HAVING BEEN FOR SOME TIME PAST IN BAD HEALTH, AND DEJECTED STATE OF MIND, HAD DESTROYED HIMSELF IN A FIT OF TEMPORARY INSANITY."

The savings found in the miser's bureau, pillow, and mattress, together with the house in which he lived, and its furniture, and several other lodging-houses in Brighton, amounted in value to the sum of twenty thousand pounds; the whole of which was inherited, as no will was to be found, by his heirs at law, and only relatives, a nephew and niece.

The niece was a very beautiful and interesting young woman of five and twenty, whom he had himself placed as junior teacher, some

ten years before, in a school at Brighton, and where by her talents and good conduct she had risen to be head governess; and the nephew was a copying clerk in an attorney's office, in very delicate health, but so industrious as to have earned the good will of his employers, in spite of his bodily weakness and mental disgust of the sedentary drudgery of his situation.

To these children the old man had never given half a crown, and had constantly assured them when he called to see them, that as he himself was on the eve of bankruptcy and beggary they must look entirely to their own industry and talents for support, present and future. On several occasions Mary and Walter Hall, entirely believing his assertions, had presented him with small sums from their savings, and had united to purchase the materials, which Mary in her hours of recreation had made up) of a set of shirts for him.

It seemed probable, by his making no will,

that the miser was aware that these children, as heirs-at-law, would inherit his property—and never was an unexpected and costly legacy, more welcome or better deserved. Mary Hall had long been hopelessly attached, and all but engaged, to the Reverend Mr. Darwin, (Curate of St. ———, Brighton, and daily tutor to Colonel Pevensey's son, Marmaduke,)—but his generous support of his aged and infirm mother, and of three sisters, had made Mary resolute not to add to his heavy incumbrances that of a portionless wife.

Now, with a fortune of ten thousand pounds, Mary was no longer coy. Pride and reserve melted away at once, and she herself, in a letter to Mr. Darwin, full of exquisite tenderness and womanly devotion, proposed that after the term of mourning for her poor uncle had expired, he should prove the sincerity of his attachment, and make her his wife.

As for Walter, who, while so conscientiously

adhering to his soulless and monotonous employment, had always so hated it, and cultivated in his brief leisure, the classical studies he had begun, before his father died, to him the blessing of this unexpected fortune, was, if possible, greater still.

He purposed reading in some salubrious and healthy spot, with a private tutor, till he was fit for Oxford, and there keeping his terms, taking his degree, and probably entering the Church.

After the verdict, and the burial of the old miser, Mrs. Orde and her family made eager preparations for leaving Brighton. The Baron De Saint Felix tendered, through Captain Crevecœur, a very humble apology to Miss Jenny, which was coldly and scornfully accepted—to herself, he offered no explanation of his conduct, but to Mrs. Orde and her daughters, he confessed that it was a very bad joke, meant to try the reality of the old lady's hatred of

mankind, and the silly offspring of the whim of a moment.

The reader and Miss Jenny know better, but this explanation gained general credence.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SEASON IN TOWN.

How delightful to the enamoured and enthusiastic Jeannetta, was the season of courtship! How fond, how tender, how deferential was her suitor! how exquisite seemed all the pleasures of London, shared with him.

How, when she played or sang, he listened enraptured to her performance—how, when she worked or drew, he lingered by her side,

to praise and to encourage! What magic progress he made in English, under her instruction—how early did he come! how late did he stay! how, if any accident kept him from her, some adoring billet and exquisite bouquet, or other love-token, reminded her how much he loved her, and how bitterly he regretted the brief absence.

In private, his favourite place was at her feet—in public, he was ever by her side—during three or four nightly balls, during the season, he never wearied of the waltz or the Polka with her—whatever she said was good, whatever she did was right, whatever she preferred was best, whatever she disliked was odious, whatever she wore was exquisite.

In Courtship how often is it thus! and oh, what a sad, sad preparatory establishment, for one who is to pass through the ordeal of Wedlock, and perhaps to take a high degree in the schools of suffering and sorrow!

It is like sedulously spoiling a child at home,

humouring its caprices, gratifying its whims, idolizing its beauty, and feeding all its little wilful appetites for forbidden pleasures, and then sending it to a stern schoolmistress, and among inimical, and harsh, and jeering school-fellows—to find its own level, and learn humility through shame and misery.

Jeannetta cannot believe (what [idolized *fiancée* can,) that the time will ever come, when she will be kept waiting, not by the minute, but the hour!—when her gentle reproach will be received, not with contrite anguish, but with haughty contempt, or sarcastic rudeness—when whatever she does will be wrong—whatever she says silly—whatever she prefers will be odious—whatever she dislikes will be exquisite—when her looks will be coarsely criticised, her dress, if economical, spitefully abused, if costly and elegant, bitterly grudged!

Jeannetta, who so loves her mother, her sister, and even her eccentric great-aunt, Miss Jenny—Jeannetta, who smiles with such grate-

ful fondness on her Gonzalve, for his delicate attentions to all her dear ones—his brotherly and sweet affection for Rosalie, his respectful devotion to her mother, and his patient and well-bred endurance, of all Miss Jenny's attacks and eccentricities! Can she believe that the time will ever come, when he will see them all with an evil eye—because she is his own—because he has nothing more to win, or to hope, or to fear from her! because “Custom has come with its inevitable curse,” and desire has ended in satiety, and love in loathing.

Will he...her beau ideal...her generous, her proud one! will he, now so lavish of every tribute, ever grudge these dear ones, with surly watchfulness, the common-place hospitality of his roof and his table!

Can he ever defy her mother—quarrel with her sister, and offend or ridicule her poor eccentric great aunt!

Instead of hanging enraptured over the

piano, while she plays and sings—will he ever from a distant sofa or arm-chair, indulging in an odious stable-boy whistle, or plying a detestable tooth-pick, beg her to cease her strumming, and perhaps (deficient himself in taste, science, or ear) criticise the performance of natural talent and cultivated skill, and wind up with a pompous decision that the sweet notes he once proclaimed to be the music of the spheres, are harsh and out of tune!

Out of tune, alas! they are out of tune with his altered feelings—his cold, inconstant, callous heart; for they still breathe harmony, tenderness, and it may be a gentle, but to him unbearable reproach.

Again, can Jeannetta believe that the landscapes he now so lauds, and the heads he takes such pride in, will ever be coldly and impatiently pushed aside, the former as daubs deficient in perspective, the latter as failures quite out of drawing; that all her ingenious and feminine fancy works will be designated as expensive trash, and silly waste of time; and that

he, who now thinks the most delicate and refined occupations, too gross for her 'fairy fingers,' will ever surlily advocate their abrogating to themselves the offices of her household maidens, the drudgery of shirt making, the—

"Stitch, stitch, stitch,
Band and gusset and seam!"

the meaner drudgery of darning stockings—and the endless task of sewing on buttons, torn off in impatience or ill-humour.

Can Jeannetta imagine that he who now rushes to her assistance as she dispenses the tea and coffee, and blames the tea-pot and the coffee-pot as too heavy for her delicate hand—can she imagine that he will ever reproach her with ignorance of those arts of gastronomy in which our fore-mothers excelled (wise women were they, for they knew one road to the heart was through the palate), that she will have to bear the blame of every culinary failure, be

reproached with every *pièce de resistance* under or over done, and be responsible for every entremet, manqué, or forgotten sauce—that he will make her defective housekeeping a favorite source of reproach and quarrel, even while withholding entirely, bitterly grudging, or unwillingly doling out the grand *mobile* of all housekeeping-money.

That the devoted family affection he now so respects and so approves, will ever be pronounced “a childish weakness—a cursed nuisance—and a deuced bore.”

Well is it indeed for the world (if people *are* to marry and be given in marriage) that an impenetrable curtain is drawn between the Present and the Future—between ‘Courtship and Wedlock!’ for the change we have described awaits many a bride, (modified of course according to the circumstances and position of her husband). From the neglect in public and sneer in private, of the cold aristocrat, down to the lowest orders of brutal and

unrestrained passions, when man and wife still mean 'Baron et Femme—the master and his woman;' and where in spite of "the scanty measure of partial and reluctant protection and amelioration wrung from the legislature," and smuggled in, in clauses and sections, instead of being blazoned forth by the entire repeal of a brutal law, the husband or master still glories in the old and savage right recorded by Blackstone, allowing him '*flagelles et fustibus acriter verberare uxorem.*'

And after all what if public opinion and the growth of refinement, and clauses against personal violence, and 'assault and battery,' protect the wife from the 'sticks and whips' of the olden time, what can protect her from that scourge of scorpions, the tongue of ill temper, what can save her best and holiest affections from the stab, what her most innocent actions from the restraint caused by the perpetual fear of disapproval, what her peace and household cheerfulness from the effect of

that Gorgon of the heart—a frowning, scowling face?

There is but one safeguard; and in the hurry of passion, the temporary insanity of Love, and the giddy impulse of vanity, how seldom does woman in giving herself up inquire whether this safeguard is really hers—this safeguard is a true christian sense of religion in the man to whom she binds herself,—that religion which acknowledges the greatest of its attributes to be charity—a charity so universal that it extends its heavenly and ennobling influence even to domestic intercourse and household sway—that charity that suffereth long and is kind—that envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

To any one who has pondered on that sad and dark subject, domestic discord and wedded misery, so rife throughout the land, that exceptions astonish, it will be evident that woman's only safe-guard is in the selection of a man whose heart is really under the influence of that religion, based on the diffusive charity recorded above!

The charity that suffereth long and is kind, would protect her from the angry impatience, the harsh and hasty refusal of some reasonable request, the wanton sting, or cruel stab to some affection of her heart!

The charity that envieth not, would protect her, if in any way endowed above her lord and above her fellows, from disparagement, de-traction, and depreciation.

The charity that vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up, would save her from that frequent cause of quarrel and estrangement, the assertion of immeasurable superiority in the man, of degrading inferiority in the

woman, the boast of absolute power, the irritating and inflated self-aggrandisement... Whereas the man's superiority should be so great, and so real, as to be quietly and irresistibly, not pompously and noisily proclaimed—*Indeed, if it does not proclaim itself, its existence is more than doubtful!*

The charity that doth not behave unseemly, will protect the wife from all those minor rudenesses, those petty and revolting breaches of good-breeding...so carefully avoided before marriage...often alas! so grossly indulged in after!...The tooth-pick, the cigar, the muddy boots, the want of punctuality, the rude address, the short or snappish answer, the ill-bred silence, the slovenly attire, the insulting neglect and indifference in public, the harsh word and cutting jibe in private...from all these, and a thousand other wounding, stinging, but very general *oublie des convenances*, would the wife be protected by the "charity that doth not behave itself unseemly"; for all

these thing *are most unseemly*—the charity that seeketh not her own, will certainly protect her from that greedy marital assumption of all rights, power, and resources, which make the poor wife a mere puppet in a household.

If 'not easily provoked', what harsh retorts for unmeant attacks, and what cruel jibes for unintentional short comings will the wife be spared? The charity that thinketh no evil, must protect her every deed from misconstruction, her looks from censure, and her words from misinterpretation.

The charity that rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, will keep the husband pure himself, and proud of purity in her, and make him glory in her truth and in his own!

The charity that beareth all things, will make the husband patient of her weakness of mind or body—gentle if she is quick, gentle if she is slow...It will make him forgive her faults, and palliate her failings!

The charity that believeth all things, will save the wife's loyal and sensitive heart from the stinging sense of suspicion and distrust, and its noble confidence will beget devotion !

The charity that hopeth all things, will secure the wife from the murmurs of discontent and despondency, and the domestic atmosphere from the gloom of dejection and despair !

While to sum up all, that charity that endureth all things, is proof at once against great evils and minor annoyances, against ruin abroad, or a rainy day at home...against bankruptcy of name and fortune, or a button off a shirt !...against a bad investment, or a bad dinner...a prodigal son, or a smoking chimney ...an undutiful daughter, or a creaking door ...an incurable disease, or a crying babe ! An invalid wife, or an untidy room...a raging tooth-ache, or gummy ink, greasy paper, and an incurable pen with the post going out, or a messenger hurrying for an answer.

Against being made responsible herself and

punished as such, for all these and countless other great and serious misfortunes, or small and teasing annoyances; often more difficult to bear patiently; for some men have died bravely, who would have ill-endured the tooth-ache—and a hurdy-gurdy, or bag-pipe under his window, has infuriated an author, who has borne with patience the failure of a work to which he had devoted his life!

CHAPTER VII.

WHILE the happy and sunny days of courtship pass so fleetly over Jeannetta's beautiful head—Lady Beauchamp, unknown to her sister-in-law, has affianced herself to Crevecœur, and is the object of attentions as devoted and acceptable, though not as delicate and refined... Lady Beauchamp, like so many women of fashion of a certain age, is a great *gastronome*,

an epicure in eating and drinking, and has more than once, in seasons of trial and trouble, narrowly escaped acquiring the deadly habit of seeking temporary oblivion in intoxication ! Liqueurs and champagne, these were the "passions" of Lady Beauchamp, and Crevecœur soon discovered these propensities, and flattered them accordingly ; cases of choicest Sillery and of Maraschino, Crème de Noyau, Eau de vie de Dantzic, Parfait Amour, Curaçoa and Rosolio, were the libations he poured out at her shrine, and grievously did these offerings confirm her unwomanly, and perilous predilection, and feed in the most costly, lavish, and enticing manner that taste which is death, death to mind and body !

During the short time necessary to Lady Beauchamp to procure her trousseau. The Captain, (between whom and Mrs. Orde, a sudden and unexplained coldness had arisen) spent most of his time in driving Lady Beau-

champ to different restaurateurs and taverns in London and the suburbs, high in repute for the excellence of their wines, and the delicacy of their cookery. On these occasions Lady Beauchamp (for appearances sake) was always accompanied by some female bon vivant of Fashion and quality, who shared the expenses of these epicure feasts, and saved, by her presence, the fair fame of Lady Beauchamp from suspicion and from slander.

Sometimes it was a dainty French repast at Very's, sometimes a substantial, first-rate English dinner at the Star and Garter, Richmond. Sometimes a turtle and venison feast at Long's or Mivart's, sometimes a white bait dinner at Greenwich, or a fish banquet at the East or West India Dock taverns, Blackwall; the gay elderly epicures who contributed their company and their gold, to these expensive entertainments, had no cause to complain of the Captain as a caterer or a paymaster.

His own expenditure was most liberal and

even lavish. He always drove the party in his own equipage, and often added to the repast dainties and liqueurs, beyond the reach of the Tavern-keepers.

Lady Beauchamp's friends congratulated her while they envied her, her handsome, good-humoured, devoted, generous, and evidently most wealthy conquest; and all advised her not to let milliners, or lawyers, delay the ceremony, which was to make her the lawful sharer of Crevecœur's wealth, and secure her so fine looking, and so amiable a husband!

The Count Gonzalve de Montfaucon, so remarkable for the beauty of his person, the dignity and reserve of his manners, and the elegance and expenditure of the bachelor establishment, he shared with the Captain and the Baron, was the object, in London, of that excessive admiration and interest, so often lavished on any shewy looking foreigner. His devotion to Jeannetta did not prevent his making hundreds of useless conquests among

the fair of May fair. Single and (to their shame be it spoken) married women too, did all they could to attract his notice and shake his faith. The more he tried to seclude himself, (and he did earnestly try to do so) the more were the ladies of London resolved to have him at their dinners, at their balls, in their opera boxes, and if possible at their feet.

When Jeannetta and Rosalie were presented; Mrs. Orde made a great point of his being presented too, and a dozen noblemen, (urged by their wives) disputed for that honor. He went with the Ordes to the palace balls, and wherever he went, whatever royal, noble, or beautiful lips and eyes smiled upon him, he never unbent from his proud and dignified reserve, except by Jeannetta's side, and never paid to any other beauty, any attentions but those demanded by the etiquette of society.

Throughout that season which Mrs. Orde insisted on their sharing together before their union, all his object seemed to be to hasten his

nuptials with Jeannetta, all his happiness to adore and to attend her, and all his desire to keep himself as much as possible aloof from all his followers, and admirers, male and female, particularly those of his own country whom, for some reason or other (perhaps jealousy of their attentions to Jeannetta, and dread of their fascinations) he avoided as much as possible.

The Baron de Saint Felix finding nothing was to be done with Rosalie, or Miss Jenny, had made pointed attempts at insinuating himself into the good graces of Mrs. Orde herself—but that lady, deeply wounded by the inconsistency and neglect of the Captain, whom she had really been weak enough to like, and suspecting that the stipulations of her husband's will (perhaps betrayed by Lady Beauchamp,) had caused the Captain's desertion and would have the same effect on the Baron, determined to nip all hope in the bud, and to consider "Courtship and Wedlock" henceforth as

matters in which she had no interest except on her daughter's account.

Indeed it is but justice to her, to say, that though the attentions, the attractions, and the reputed wealth of a man near her own age, had disposed her to a second marriage, she was no regular husband-hunter, and would have felt rather insulted than complimented, by the interested attentions of a French fop, young enough to be her son! The Baron De Saint Felix however, after he had once been launched into London society, found the charms of his person—his light moustachios—soft blue eyes—*air militaire*—and above all, his claims as a Baron and a foreigner, made him the object of so much female attention, and so popular at balls and soirées, that he laughed at his folly, in having dreamt of selling himself for Miss Jenny's six hundred a-year—and began to suspect that many a pretty girl, worth more thousands than Rosalie could boast, would gladly become Baronne De Saint Felix.

It was not certainly in the highest or most exclusive circles, that any of the party moved—if we except Gonzalve, Count De Montfaucon, to whom, had he chosen to avail himself of the privilege, every house of importance was open.

But Mrs. Orde, Lady Beauchamp, the Captain, and the Baron, moved in that extensive London circle, composed of what we before stated, may be called the aspiring class! a class, in which the fag end of the nobility amalgamates with the gentry, with the families of beneficed clergymen, naval and military officers—wealthy merchants—bankers great stock brokers—great brewers—a class in which Baronets, Knights, and M.P's. abound, but are still made much of, and looked up to—where Lords and Ladies are considered as stars of first rate magnitude—and made a fuss with, and boasted of—where to be presented is considered an achievement to be manœuvred for, not calmly claimed as an hereditary right—

where a ticket to Almack's is considered an acquisition, and an invitation to the palace, a triumph and distinction.

A class in which lions and lionesses are exhibited, and teased for contributions to albums, and where foreigners, with a title of any kind are the most favoured and popular of beaux—Mrs. Orde and Lady Beauchamp, it is true, had claims to move in a far more exalted and aristocratic sphere than this—but in this, accident had placed them, and in this, many were contented to move with them, who preferred being notabilities here, to being unremarked in a higher circle. The Countess of Manvers was one of the suns of this system—and happier when handed down to dinner, as the lady of highest rank present, by Sir—this, or Colonel, or Admiral—that, than when following in the wake of greater luminaries, at the aristocratic banquets of her sister Peeresses.

To those unacquainted with the intricate machinery of London society, it would seem

that those who went to court, to Almacks... who were occasionally invited to the Palace, and received the nobility at their tables and their balls, must be in the first circles, and among the *élite* and yet, in spite of all this they may be as completely shut out, as the Peri from Paradise.

Many a plain Mr.—would scorn to figure at a ball, given by one of the “aspiring class,” though a list of noble names and titles might shine among the guests; and Colonel Pevensey would as soon have thought of dancing at Vauxhall, or rolling down the hill at Greenwich Fair, as of figuring at any entertainment, given by any member of this class, from which, however, he would have chosen a wife, but out of which, had she accepted him, he would have entirely removed her.

Of this extensive circle, the Baron De Saint Felix soon became the pride, the pet, the *enfant gâté*, and among many young ladies who smiled upon him, he selected, as the object

of his serious attentions, a tall, dark, and handsome Miss Juliana Mostyn, about six and twenty, the daughter of Colonel Mostyn, a gentleman with a very large West India property, and living in very elegant and expensive style.

It was probably the reputed wealth of this lady, and the many sumptuous banquets and brilliant balls, to which he was invited by her mamma, that induced the Baron de Saint Felix to fix upon Juliana Mostyn as his future Baronne, for though he professed the most ardent passion, she was not at all to his taste; and though she was very condescending and very accessible, she did not like, in the countless pier glasses of her mother's drawing-rooms, to see how much she towered above him, a great disadvantage to both, was this untoward contrast, since Miss Mostyn's height made the little Baron look femininely small and slight, and his diminutive proportions gave her a somewhat masculine appearance.

However, if Love is an omnipotent god in reconciling all disproportions and discrepancies of all kinds, Plutus is not behind-hand with him; and the twenty thousand pounds which old Mostyn promised to give his daughter, with the great expectancies he more than hinted at, made Juliana altogether the most promising of those attainable damsels who had smiled on the agreeable little 'Baron.'

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRAPPER TRAPPED.

So then our three foreigners are on the eve of making excellent matches!

The Count Gonzalve Montfaucon to a young, a beautiful, and devoted woman, passionately attached to him, amiable, accomplished, well-born, with a good fortune, and with excellent expectations.

And in spite of the general and, we must

think, well-founded objection to foreign alliances, we must say that the Count and his intended seemed most admirably matched—their beauty, their dignity, their exclusive and impassioned devotion, all were in perfect harmony.

But both were, alas! formed to shine rather in Courtship than Wedlock. High thoughts, noble aspirations, impassioned devotion, intellectual absorption, and poetical or sentimental reverie, of what avail are they in a state which demands rather the common-place virtues of patience, discretion, compliance, notability, imperturbable good humour, and meek and quiet contentment.

Now all these qualities Rosalie eminently possessed, set off by that soft, feminine, prettiness and Hebe bloom, that exquisite neatness and fresh simplicity of attire, which are far more important in a wife, than the stately, queen-like charms, that always seem to require the tiara and the robe; and to be out of place anywhere

but in drawing-rooms and banquetting halls. It seems almost impossible that the "most thorough bred and fairest fingers" should ever employ themselves in sewing on a button, still less darning a hole, and one cannot believe that the housekeeper's room could ever be honored by the presence of that stately form. Its descent into a kitchen would be indeed an anomaly. However it is only in the possible reverses of these days of domestic earthquakes, this epoch of ups and downs, that such extreme condescension could be expected of one, by birth a lady and by marriage a Countess. But in all ranks of life, under the very loftiest, a taste for, and a knowledge of domestic economy and good housekeeping, is of essential importance to happiness in the married state, and to the comfort of home.

Some women—(indeed we trust the greater number)—are born with this taste and talent, which is as decided a one as a genius for music, for poetry, or for painting, and where it is not

innate it is very difficult to acquire it, and perhaps never really obtained in perfection. Those who have it not, were meant by nature for 'single blessedness;' and yet it is an important contradiction, that these very women so unfitted for Wedlock, are most brilliant and bewitching in Courtship. To this circumstance may be traced, alas! many of the comfortless, ill-regulated homes, and many of the unhappy matches so rife in our land.

Jeannetta and her Count were now formally engaged; and at the end of a month their wedding was to take place at Mrs. Orde's country seat, Fairfield Hall. The Baron de Saint Felix, whose attachment was of such a much more recent date, was subjected to a much less severe and protracted ordeal. His own anxiety to be settled in life, was fortunately, but very unusually met by a similar, or perhaps a greater, impatience on the part of the lady and her parents. Col. and Mrs. Mostyn meditated a visit to the Baths of Hamburg for incipient rheumatism, and they were generously

anxious to see the young people settled before they set out.

The young Baron's estates being (as he said) in the South of France, and descending naturally to any children his lady might bring him, were not to be brought into settlement; but with a sum of five-thousand pounds in gold and bank notes, he in a perfectly unusual manner, (supposed to be foreign,) gladdened the eyes of his future father and mother-in-law, and this trifle, as they justly and rather scornfully termed it, they permitted him to settle on their child!—It was forthwith invested in the three per cents at the father's suggestion, for separate use, or pin-money.

This the Baron did not very much like, but was ashamed to make any demur about such a trifle, when marrying a girl of such good fortune and brilliant expectations.

He was, however, disappointed in some degree, as most fortune-hunters are at the last moment, for instead of paying down the whole

or any part of Miss Mostyn's fortune in ready money, the father prepared, on account of the youth and the inexperience of the young couple, to give his bond for the quarterly payment of two-hundred pounds—making an income of eight-hundred, which was secured on his West India property, and of which the capital would be forthcoming at his death, or when any very satisfactory investment presented itself.

The Baron, who had revelled *d'avance* in anticipated thousands, looked and felt very blank and disappointed at this arrangement; but Col. Mostyn was a very off-hand and inscrutable person—Mrs. Mostyn a very haughty, sneering, and sarcastic woman—Juliana all obedience to her parents, and apparent ignorance and inexperience about money matters; she left, she said, all those mean, odious, huckster, and pettifogging arrangements to papa's lawyer, and didn't care one penny whether she had a settlement or not,

she knew she could depend on her Hyacinth's love and generosity, and felt sure he would give her more money than stingy papa had ever done; but all this time the Baron's poor £5,000 was being tightly tied up in the three per cents, and settled on the disinterested girl for her "separate use"—The day was fixed, and the wedding, a strictly private one, (on account, it was said, of the death of Mrs. Mostyn's aunt), took place, and the first quarterly instalment, of the eight-hundred a-year, was placed by the tall, corpulent, and Jewish-faced Col. Mostyn in the small hand of the little Baron, with the air of an emperor feeing a dancing master—Juliana with a splendid, *trousseau* was handed, by her little husband, whom she quite eclipsed, into a travelling chariot, he had, by his father-in-law's advice, taken on trial, previous to its being presented by Col. Mostyn, and the four greys with their white favours, and the two post-boys, similarly adorned, bore away the triumphant

bride, majestic in her sweeping robes and floating plumes...inflated with crinolin—and expansive and expensive with flounces and furbelows; so much for the new made Baronne! The bride-groom looked as cross and sullen, and felt as discontented as bride-grooms generally do, at that epoch which is at once a wedding and a funeral! the wedding of their own persons, and the funeral of all their careless bachelor delights.

Indeed an envious brides-maid, who had herself tried to captivate the Baron de Saint Felix, averred, that when the summer breeze unfurling the bride's ample and gossamer draperies, completely envelopped the bride-groom's little person, he, in disentangling himself, among the titters and giggles of the ladies, uttered a very inexcusable and angry "*sacre*"! When he took his place by his voluminous and animated partner, who was waving her large hand and long arm in adieu to her parents, and looking anxiously at the

piles of packing cases containing her finery, the poor little fellow sunk back with a heavy sigh, a real tear dimmed his light blue eye, but he was soon quite lost sight of, behind the ample skirts, countless flounces and extensive pink satin visite of Juliana Baronne de Saint Felix.

CHAPTER IX.

As ever since the little Baron's discomfiture at Brighton, in his gallant attack on the august Man-hater, (the scornful Miss Jenny), a great coldness had arisen between our friends and himself, the only intimation of his marriage with which they were honoured, was a highly glazed envelope with a silver border, containing two cards, whose different sizes were admirably

figurative of the relative proportions of him self and his Baronne.

On the little one was engraved, Le Baron Hyacinthe de Saint Felix, and on the large one, La Baronne Hyacinthe de Saint Felix !

The marriage was announced in the Morning Post, and their departure on a tour to the Lakes figured in the fashionable movements ; and while the Honeymoon, however clouded, shines upon the pair, we have no right to scrutinise their movements or their feelings, or to let in the garish light of day, upon their harmony or their discord.

The cards of the Baron and the Baronne de Saint Felix, had scarcely been consigned to their receptacle...and the marriage and the wedded pair had scarcely been dismissed from the minds and the tongues of the Orde party, when Rosalie uttered a shriek of surprise as she darted forward to receive another bridal envelope accompanied by what looked like a slice of a wooden cake, and was the deal en-

closure of a section of that interesting dainty.

“Oh, mamma,” she cried, “you will never, never guess who is married now! and so funnily announced! do guess—guess Jeannetta! guess Gonzalve, guess dearest aunty! guess what you would think the most unlikely match in the world! but what I hinted I rather expected, though you all so scouted the idea.”

“Oh, I cannot guess,” said Jeannetta, “I never scouted any idea, nor heard of any hint Rosa.”

“No my sweet sister, you are quite acquitted! for you live in a world of your own, and though your stately person moves among us, your lofty mind, with its noble mate, is in that more exalted sphere.

“Thy pretty sister may joke me now,” said the Count,” and make me blush myself—but I will have my time one day, what I read just

now about one Gerard ... Gerard — Gerard Esdaile I tink."

Rosalie changed colour.

"What did you read, dear Gonzalve?" she said, "about our earliest friend, our adopted brother."

"Tell me who is married, and I will tell you what I read about him."

"A bargain," said Rosalie, "but do you guess mamma."

"Old Miss Pickle," said Mrs. Orde, "she's the most unlikely person I know except dear aunty there."

"The maist likely I ken," said Miss Jenny "is the auld fule Lady Beauchamp, and that auld philandering French Coptain, (I beg yer pardon Count) Crevecœur.

"Aunty is right, well done aunty," laughed Rosalie, "but her laugh ceased when she saw her mother turn very pale and rise from her chair to leave the room, to conceal a sudden burst of tears.

The party looked at each other in sorrow and amazement, but delicacy towards Mrs. Orde forbade any remark.

"You do not mean to say," said Jeannetta "that Aunt Beauchamp has married Gonzalve's friend, the Captain."

"I do indeed," said Rosalie, "and any one who was alive to what was going on at Brighton, would not wonder at the announcement. Look here. "Le Capitaine Crevecœur, and Lady Beauchamp Crevecœur!" Is not that an absurdity; by what right she keeps her first husband's name, now she has taken a second, it is impossible to discover, and except that one does not like one father's sister to make a fool of herself, I do not see that it matters much to us. The Captain is very rich and very good humoured, and those are the great essentials in most marriages, and certainly would be in Aunt Beauchamp's. I shall drink their health and happiness after dinner, when I produce this piece of cake

And now Gonzalve tell me what you have read about Gerard."

The Count pointed to a paragraph in the paper, announcing that Gerard Esdaile, Scholar of Baliol, and only son of the celebrated and learned divine, Doctor Esdaile, had just taken a double first class...and had obtained the prize for Latin prose, and English verse.

It was now Rosalie's time to change color, and to turn away to hide the emotion and agitation of her heart. Miss Jenny took up the paper and her spectacles, to certify herself that one of that reprobated race, called Mankind, had really done anything, indicative of genius and industry and worthy, of being recorded in the 'pooblic joornals,'

"The Count and Rosalie were far too much absorbed in their own emotions, and in themselves, to give more than a few minutes consideration to a success, which to poor Gerard was of such vital importance, and all

unmarked, Rosalie left the room, and stole to her own chamber—There her pure young heart poured out its passionate thanksgiving! and gratitude to the Creator, united with devotion to the creature, kept her on her knees, (her fair face bathed in happy tears,) till her mother (rendered anxious) by her long absence, came to fetch her.

Mrs. Orde was pale, and had evidently been weeping—but her air was resolute, and her manner composed...she had driven the last foolish weakness of her heart away, for ever! but it was like parting with the last born of the bosom, the *Benoni* of the affections! It is very true, that after fifty, woman *ought* to have taken leave of love, in all his bewitching shapes, from flirtation to devotion. But when we consider the luxury it is to woman's heart, to find herself essential to another's happiness—the fascinating occupation that an attachment gives to her mind—and the

tenderness with which she clings to the last affection it is probable she will either feel or inspire, we ought to forgive her readiness to love and to believe that she is yet lovely and beloved, even after ruthless Time has marked her as his own—and she knows in her inmost heart, that she ought to make friendship and family-affection, the only *culte* of her heart and that she runs the frightful risk of ridicule and desertion...in suffering herself even to dream of Love!

Mrs. Orde felt ashamed of Crevecoeur—but more ashamed of herself! She was angry with him, but far more angry still with her own silly heart, and vain imagination.—But the struggle was secret—and the triumph over her own weakness, a silent one...and now in the detected interest of her Rosalie, in Gerard Esdaile, and her anxieties for the happiness of that attachment, which she now for the first time suspected—she forgot her own sorrows, and her mortifying disappointment. Mrs. Orde

had by this time seen so much of 'great matches,' in the entire estrangement of Lady Beauchamp's daughters—the Marchese,—and the Countess of Tunbridge, she had also so firm a conviction, that Jeannetta would be very much lost to her in the foreign-alliance she was about to form, that she began to sicken of ambition, and to dread the thoughts of grandeur, in a son-in-law, Gerard Esdaile, with his true piety, his well-known principles, his long tried regard for them all, his noble spirit, and his affectionate heart, became as much an object of anxiety, as he had been of avoidance; and she only feared lest the love he had cherished from boyhood for Jeannetta should be of too deep and exclusive a nature, to admit of his ever returning, that which Rosalie had evidently long nourished in secret for him.

But Love, though he can exist on a very, very little hope, cannot live on without any at all. During Gerard's last interview with Jeannetta every scintilla of hope was extin-

guished in his bosom ; Jeannetta's image in his heart was so completely uprooted that for a long time all was ruin there ! That scene at Brighton, the conviction, not only that he was not loved, but that she adored another, the smouldering jealousy that lies in every loving bosom ready to break forth, had burst at once into volcanic fires—an earthquake of the affections was the result ; and all the beautiful region of Hope and Love, and Confidence in woman and in himself was a waste, blackened with the ashes of Despair !

One would have imagined that, after this, Gerard would have done with love, and one would not believe that the victims of an earthquake would ever build again where their homes had been laid waste. Experience proves that most men like Gerard, rejected by one woman, are very open to any tenderness from another ; and that the victims of Vesuvius and of Etna return to the scene of their ruin, there to rebuild their dwellings.

. And Gerard was not a man of feelings and affections *only*, he was a man of mind, of thought...of cultivated, rich, and powerful mind—of deep and original thought. Our favorite living poet beautifully describes the dawn of love on the mind of an idiot boy, in those fine lines:

“ The heart in waking woke the mind.”

And certainly heart and mind do in a powerful and wonderful manner act and re-act upon each other.

But yet the breaking of a heart has often been the making of a mind—driven from the sweet shelter of happy Love, man seeks refuge from Memory in Labour, and quits, like Adam of old, the rosy bowers of Eden, to reap, with the sweat of brain, if not of brow, the laurels of Renown, the flowers of Poesy, the fruits of Science and of Art. Happy love has made many a vain idler...disappointed love many a hero...many a poet!

We owe our Byron to Mary Chaworth's preference of 'Jack Musters,' and Despair became to him an inspiration and a muse.

"He fed on poisons, and they were to him
A kind of nutriment."

And such they are to all!

CHAPTER XXIV

SECOND LOVE.

THE next morning at breakfast a letter from Oxford was put into Rosalie's trembling hand. Her affected nonchalance at receiving, and her coy delay in opening it, could not conceal from her mother the lively emotion its arrival excited, and which betrayed itself by the sudden pallor that overspread her roseate complexion, and the tears that sparkled in her eyes. Jeannetta,

who expected the Count, was as usual looking from the balcony up the street, and Miss Jenny was revelling in that noble vindication of woman's moral and intellectual powers... 'Woman and her Master.' Mrs. Orde alone watched with deep, though secret emotion, the confirmation of all her suspicions, and feeling for the restraint which she perceived that Rosalie was putting on her anxiety, she said, with assumed unconcern...

"I think, my love, I recognise poor Gerard's hand. If no one else feels any interest in our old friend, I do, so pray let us see how he bears all his honors, and whether now he is eminent he is still affectionate."

"Read his letter aloud, dear mamma!" said Rosalie, afraid her trembling voice should betray the secret of her heart.

What pains we all take, and how vainly too, to conceal that we have been silly enough to let a pleasant, quiet lodging in our heart, to that captivating impostor Love, to whom one has to

give up the whole tenement, with all its furniture...who requires constant attendance, unlimited credit, and pays us back with the false coin of Judas's kisses, crocodile tears, false smiles, and refuses to make good anything he has broken, though the list include promises innumerable, scores of vows, dozens of oaths, and that invaluable article which can never be repaired, a female heart of the antique mould, and therefore a priceless gem!

Mrs. Orde read:

“MY DEAR, KIND ROSALIE,

“I know you will wish me joy, and so will our mutual mamma and great-aunt—Jeannetta too, if she can snatch one moment from love to bestow upon affection. You have heard, perhaps, that I have got a double first, the Latin essay, and, what you, Rosy, will value more, because you can understand

it better, the English prize poem. Now all this and much more, less showy, but of more intrinsic value, I owe to your advice, your sympathy and the consolatory interest you took in me, when I was a miserable moon-struck boy—something between the ‘moping idiot, and the madman gay.’

“A fortnight hence the commemoration takes place; will you come and witness the triumph you have secured me? How my laurels will bud and bloom, beneath your sunny smile. Do come—‘Come one, come all.’ For what avails half life’s success?

“ ‘No early friend shall see or share!’

“Tell dear Jeannetta, with my brotherly love, that I am so completely cured of my silly and presumptuous impertinence, that I shall be delighted to see the Count, and shall love him for her sake!—I hope dear Miss Jenny will be of the party; she will find women greatly

in the ascendent in these classic haunts—and the best hit in my poem is a tribute to the sex, which I expect will bring me rounds of applause from the men, smiles from the fair, and one approving nod from Miss Jenny. My beloved father will be here—and if you will all come, my joy will be quite boyish; it is so at the very thought; a line by return to say yes; I shall spend the interval in preparations to make you all happy, and to do you all honour. Allow me to make a profound bow to aunt Jenny, to kiss the rosy cheek of my kind mamma Orde, and your fair hands, my early playmates, and my sisters by adoption! What a lion I shall be, if the belles of the Morning Post and the Court Journal, are seen on my arm. Yours, sweet Rosalie, while I am

“GERARD ESDAILE.”

“Bravo,” cried Mrs. Orde, “he is cured, indeed! and I declare, his brilliant success and evident happiness, take a great load from my heart! I have often felt very uneasy about

him, since his bitter disappointment in his first love !”

“ A disappointment that would have broken woman’s faithful heart, or, at least, have poisoned her life,” said Miss Jenny, bridling—
“ but Mon is a creature quite incapable o’ sae sooblime a virtue as Constancy ! a puir, frail, feeble being—without energy to be vary good, or vary bod—and na sooner aff wi’ the auld luv, than the twa-legged shottlecock is on wi’ the new !”

“ I do not at all agree with you, aunt,” said Rosalie, reddening ; “ at least as far as Gerard is concerned ; and I am quite sure that, had his first attachment been returned, his devotion to its object would have been as lasting, as it would have been entire ; but he would, in my opinion, be a weak fool indeed, to waste all the warm affections of his young and impassioned heart, on one, who not only scorned him, but so openly encouraged another.”

“ I never thought there was much depth in Gerard's character,” said Jeannetta, a little piqued, at finding herself so easily resigned and so soon forgotten. “ He may have very quick feelings...I dare say he has—but he is not capable, I am certain, of any deep devotion to any one !”

“ Well, at any rate,” said Mrs. Orde, “ he has proved that his intellect is of the highest order, whatever his heart may be, and I, with Rosalie, think that heart, one of the noblest, truest, and best, that ever beat in a human breast...but be that as it may, all must agree in a feeling of triumph at his success, and of gratification that, in spite of all that has occurred to estrange him, he still clings to his second mamma, and his adopted sisters, as he always called us, and you see, calls us still... I think you, none of you, not even aunt Jenny herself, can dream of refusing his modest and affectionate entreaty, that we will witness his triumph !”

"I've na' the least objection," said Miss Jenny, "to encourage, by my ain individual presence, the young mon, wha' is meritorious eno' (always conseederin' that he is but a mon after a'), and, indeed, I luke upon his success at Oxford, as an indirect and (I doot na') a most unintentional compliment to the intellectooal and moral influence o' my ain sex... What, I ask you a', would Gerard Esdaile be the day...if when it pleased God to remove his ain gifted and excellent mither, (dootless because the auld buke-worm, Dr. Esdaile wi' a' his learning, kenned na how to appreciate her superiority), what, I say, would that neglected male bairn ha' been, body and soul—if you, niece, had na tended his then weakly frame, if I had na' forteefied his then feeble mind, and if my dear grond nieces, had na' by admeeting him to constant companionsheep in their studies and their pastimes, geevin to the pedantic education his father bestowed on him...the refinement, the polish, and I may add, the humanity,

no mon educated by mon alane can ever boast !
—If Coleridge has said sa' wisely, that there
is a' ways something femineene—(not effeminate
mark me, lassies!) in a mon o' ganius. If
Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the most perfect
creations of whose motchless pen, are his Ione,
his blind floower girl, his Pauline, his Louise
de La Vallière, and mony ither o' my sex, has
said, that a mon o' ganius is ever mair at hame
wi' women than wi' men...If Johnson, Cowper,
Rousseau, and, a' the maist eminent amang
men own, thot a gifted mither is mon's best
guide, instructor, companion !—If Milton's Eve
was his maist finished creation, (as it dootless
was his great master's too, and if Shake-
speare's sel') owes half his immortality to the
joostice he daured, even in the dark ages of
mon's tyranny, and woman's moral and intel-
lectooal thralldom, to do to female merit and
influence...I think it would not have misbecome
Gerard Esdaile in the hour of success, to own
wha' first by a' a mither's care strengthened

his frail body (which else had been a drawback to the exertions o' his mind) wha' first gave him habits of order, self-discipline, application, and emulation—wha' first taught him to luv the poesy, wha' noo rewards him with her inspeerations, and wha' first impressed on his young mind the grond moxim of a success—
'Concentrate! Condense! Aspeere! Weel begun is half dune'—'And he wha' would reach the mark at a', must aim at the centre o' the target'. My ain opeenion is, that Gerard would na' boast the prize poem the day, had I not made him as a bairn get up by heart withoot meessing ain word, my ain grond—epic poem ca'd 'Woman, Heaven's best work,' and my didoctic piece on 'Mon's mental and moral deficiency!'"

It is too much to assert, that any one present listened very attentively to Miss Jenny's long and enthusiastic harangue; but that might be owing to the fact that all present had frequently heard the greater part of it before.

At the close of her speech the Count arrived, and his young affianced, as their hands and eyes met, forgot the world contained any other. Mrs. Orde, however, seeing in Rosalie's flushed cheek and anxious eye the impatience of her heart, soon extracted from both a joyful promise to accompany her to the Commemoration. Every new scene is so bewitching in the prospect of enjoying it with the loved one—The halls grey with time, the groves green with spring, the classic Isis, and the cloistered haunts! how did Jeannetta long to behold them hand in hand with him, and how did he whisper in her ear, that with her for his Eve every place was an Eden!

It was settled then, that the whole party should accept of Gerard's invitation, and on Rosalie devolved the delightful task of writing to him to announce an arrangement which promised him so much pride and joy.

CHAPTER XI.

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

LET us leave hot and crowded London for awhile, though the season is still at its giddy height, and though wealth and fashion have brought in their train every luxury of nature, and of art, that their magic power can bring; and what can they not, we are tempted to ask, as we gaze on matchless fruits and flowers that seem never so fresh and fair as in the very

centre of thousands of habitations and millions of squalid inhabitants, where in the sultriest weather the sons of luxury have ice at will to cool their sparkling draughts and luscious dainties...where parks and gardens of verdure, through which bright streams glide, woo the hot and weary feet of themselves and their steeds—what can we seek out of London, that London itself does not yield, at least to all the children of Dives?

We seek what London can never boast, the pure breeze fresh from 'the wild and open sea,' the stillness unbroken save by the silver ripple or the majestic dash of waters against those white cliffs. We seek too, the skies unblackened by smoke, and that gentle elasticity of spirit and of frame which Father ocean bestows in some measure, even on the pilgrims to his shrines, and which he lavishes on his peculiar children whose home is on his bosom. So that no dangers daunt, no difficulties sadden, no dejection bows them; and firmest in faith,

brightest in hope, strongest in endurance, and bravest in spirit, are those Sons of old Ocean, the Seamen of our Isle!

To Brighton then we summon thee, dear reader, while busy milliners and mantua makers prepare Jeannetta's trousseau, and while Rosalie and Gerard Esdaile make, out of the approaching visit to Oxford, an excuse for the daily exchange of letters crossed and re-crossed.

We would fain know if still by the wild sea Violet broods on love. If she has yet discovered that the idol is clay? or if in the passionate worship of her young heart, she still invests her Pevensy with all the god-like attributes a loving maiden's fancy bestows on some fascinating and beguiling idler, who so far from being the pure, and noble and honorable being she creates and worships, has long ago lost "the whiteness of his soul" would secretly in her presence, and openly in that of many others scoff at, and deride all she thinks so high-minded, and whose notions of honor, go no farther

than the resisting any wrong or insult offered to himself, but do not extend to the protecting from his own vile thoughts, and viler intentions, the woman who believes in and trusts him ! The honor that would allow him to make the maiden of his bosom a cast away, yet compel him to seek her brother's blood should he proclaim him what he is !

Colonel Pevensey did not covet the young Violet's adoration. He knew he was not what she deemed him. He knew that if once she beheld him cold, worldly and commonplace, her love and all its wild delusions would vanish. He found her devotion passionate, exacting, often inconvenient—to love her without an object or an end he despised as boyish folly, to seduce her, he knowing too well what seduction was to woman, he thought, as he told Symons with a shrug, would be hardly fair, nothing more !—but to marry her, he pronounced, (and in this Symons warmly agreed,) would be a madness, an absur-

dity, which none but a lunatic could dream of, and none but a fool perpetrate.

And yet in spite of all this, the natural vanity of man induced him to keep up her illusions. He did sometimes seek to avoid her, but never to disenchant her, just as the heroines of the old romances, (aye and the new ones too) however much they may suffer from the redundancy of their conquests and the pertinacity of their adorers; never, among all their devices for ridding themselves of unwelcome suitors, adopt any which can make them appear less lovely or less amiable, that "worst of disenchantments a morning wrapper," as Sir Edward calls it and those greater abominations still, a set of curl papers, have never been adopted yet by the Clarissas and Pamelas of romance or of reality; nor do their attempts to disenchant even go so far with her adorers as one angular or ungraceful attitude, one loud or shrill ejaculation, one virago look or word...such as, perhaps, has driven a

poor maid that very day to give her warning—No, while refusing a hand, they still wished to retain a heart, and while crushing his hopes to increase his admiration; and much on the same principal did Colonel Pevensey act with Violet. Every sentiment he uttered in her presence was pure and chaste—every thought he breathed noble and refined! his very glance had a winning timidity in its tenderness, (for he *did* love her a little, and admired her beyond expression), and the manners of this haughty man unbent for her with a chivalrous gentleness and a deferential softness, which few of the high-born beauties of the world, had ever elicited from him.

All this was, partly, perhaps, to keep alive her flattering, though troublesome devotion, but partly too the reflection of her own exquisite purity of thought and dignity of character—for as the meanest brooks look silver in the light of the moon, and the commonest scenes seem purified and etherealised as they reflect her

smiles, so, almost unconsciously to himself, Colonel Pevensey's thoughts, looks and manners took the tone of Violet's, and he forgot in her presence all his vile experience of men, and alas! of women too! And it was only some sly inuendo, or mischievous, though flattering jest of Symons's, that reminded him that *he* was a man of rank, of pleasure, and of the world, and she a fond girl, inexperienced, devoted, and far, far beneath him in station!

When last we left them, Violet was in all the rapturous expectation of his first letter. He had evaded a meeting, and had half unconsciously promised to write to her! to write to her! what magic to her in the poor subterfuge, contrived in order to convey the cold counsels of an unloving but yet friendly and prudent nature, without witnessing the anguish he instinctively felt they would produce—and all night long, Violet's waking and sleeping thoughts were centred on this letter, and while he dismissed it from his mind, as a nuisance and

a bore to be briefly dispatched on the morrow, she figured him to herself in his lone chamber, his midnight lamp shining on his noble head, his thoughtful brow and tearful eyes, and lighting him, as his graceful hand vainly tried to keep pace with the wild outpourings of his impassioned heart !

How should she dare to open, how quiet her heart and nerves to peruse the first love letter of her adored one ! oh, how she blest him in her fervent prayers, how she wept over the expected confession, of a love such as her own heart gloried in !

Poor, poor Violet ! what letter, penned by mortal man, would not have seemed cold to thy expectancy. Oh, if there were some magic mirror in which woman, worn out with the worship of the idol of her own creation, could see that idol as he is—and while *she* kneels, and watches and prays—could behold him “flown with insolence and wine,” scoffing with fellow sneerers at love and faith, or poisoning

the air with the nauseous smoke of a stupifying weed! or exchanging the light glance and flippant jest with some saucy soubrette, or sleeping after his soulless carouse, in dull forgetfulness of her and all her love, would she rob the Creator of his due, to lavish her adoration on the creature—would not nights of vigils and days of passionate absorption, seem madness, folly, even to herself! and would not pale cheeks and weeping eyes, and broken hearts, and bewildered brains be no more, in most cases, could the Real once take the place of the Ideal, and the scales fall from the eyes of Woman's Love!

CHAPTER XII.

THE LETTER.

VIOLET rose early—very early, for she could not rest, and she wished to be ready to receive the treasure, which, as she imagined Colonel Pevensey had spent the night in inditing, she believed he would despatch as soon as his servant was astir, and that he could imagine, that in her little lodging any one would be about.

When, however, she opened her window and saw, that what she had mistaken for dawn, was only starlight, and when she heard a neighbouring clock strike four! she felt convinced she had yet several hours to wait, and thinking that if she could but sleep they would pass more rapidly—she threw herself in her wrapper, and with her unbound hair hanging about her shoulders, on the sofa in her little sitting-room, and Nature, exhausted by her passionate vigil, threw her into a deep and trance-like sleep. As she did not ring her bell, and as the wretched maid-of-all-work of her lodgings generally depended on that bell to wake her to a day of toil and of discomfort... Violet slept far beyond her usual hour, and though the morning sun stole in and fell on all around her, lighting up at once her fair and fresh beauty and the squalid poverty of her little room... It must have awaked her, had not her head been drooping from the cushion, and her face been half buried in her arms; but the rays seemed to illumine

the golden ripples of her hair, the alabaster of her rounded throat, her gently heaving bosom, and the white folds of the wrapper which took every undulation of her nymph-like form and left her little white foot with its high instep and delicate ankle bare, but for a crimson velvet slipper belonging to some stage costume she had to adopt, but which added a singular and exquisite effect to the striking picture she presented on that wretched, little couch. A couch which a huckster's wife would have disdained, yet on which reposed a beauty that might have won a throne, and a grace, a genius, and a virtue that deserved and would have retained, what that beauty had won.

Colonel Pevensey too awoke early—he always did, his habits were a singular mixture of the soldier's and the sybarite's. His first recollection on waking was, that he had something painful to do...his second, that the sooner it was done the better, and so he took his warm-bath, and with a soldier's promptitude, per-

formed a sybarite's toilet...threw his Turkish brocaded wrapper around him—thrust his feet into slippers lined with ermine, and embroidered in gold and pearls, and garnets, by a Duchess's hand...and entering the boudoir adjoining his bath...threw himself into the easiest of easy-chairs, and rang at once for Symons, his chocolate, and his desk.

Symons, who had returned the night before, sent him word on a scrap of paper, that he would breakfast with him in half an hour, and while a tempting *déjeuner* was spread, the Colonel sipped his chocolate, and began the letter which Violet had so longed, so watched, so prayed for!

It ran thus :

“ MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

“ Forgive me if the words which prudence, friendship, and real regard for your interest dictates, seem cold to the youthful

fancy and impassioned heart of the loveliest, and most enthusiastic of her sex. The discovery of last night took even my heart by surprise, sweet Violet! and gratified vanity, and excited passion, united, I fear, to extort from me words of love, which the very tenderness with which you have inspired me make me eager to obliterate, or to withdraw.

“ If I loved, esteemed, admired, nay, revered you less, Violet, I should seem to love you more !

“ But no, all worldly minded and commonplace as I fear my notions are in most cases, I cannot take advantage of a simplicity so touching, a love so devoted, and a purity so unsuspecting as yours !

“ You love me, Violet ! and as I dwell on that bewitching and bewildering conviction, and unite it in my vain and passionate heart with the exquisite beauty, the bright intelligence, and the virgin softness of Violet, the man rises in my bosom, burns in my veins, and

almost impels me to seek you—to hide my scorching tears in your bosom, and to bear you away—far away—the brightest sacrifice Virtue ever made to Love; but even at the thought, Experience lays her cold hand on my heart, and I look through the vista of years, and I see, what God grant may never be realised, at least through me...and I feel as if for many reasons, it cannot through another, and as if no other should work that common tragedy, and live !...and then, Violet, whatever of goodness and purity my mother bequeathed to me (for I hold that all such gifts come to us from woman) and whatever of integrity and true courage I have inherited from my father, and whatever of bright and good the vile world has left me—all rise in my bosom to cry shame on the delusions of passion—and to bid me, as a man, a gentleman, a Pevensey, protect you—angel child ! from.....myself !

“ Do not judge lightly of this sacrifice. You would not, if you knew how I worship a beauty

which realises my beau ideal—and how much to me genius and virtue like yours enhance the power and the witchery of that beauty...we must part, sweet child! or rather we must never meet! My heart grows sad, and yet proud too, as it prophesies the future that awaits you, if...forgive the seeming vanity implied in the assumption of such power...if I save you, dearest innocent, at this crisis, from yourself, and from me!

“ You will weep, and you will not easily forget me; but your tears, unstained by degradation, and unscorched by remorse, will leave no trace upon your cheek.

“ Your genius will win you the topmost place in your profession...your beauty will secure you a coronet—and, better still, the love of some heart of which you will be the first and only idol, and the entire devotion of some man higher, perhaps, in actual rank...richer in this world's blessings...nobler in thought, but without those peculiar and per-

haps eccentric notions, and those engrossing and mystic paternal ties which compel me to say farewell...and forbid me to aspire to any title but that of the truest and most trustworthy of your friends,

“HARCOURT PEVENSEY.”

It certainly was not without some emotion that Colonel Pevensey indited this letter. The water sparkled in his eyes, for we are all ready to weep at our own heroism, our own virtues, however imaginary. He thought he was rejecting a sacrifice which a worse man would have gloried in. He dreamt not that it was a sacrifice which Violet would have died rather than make; and that though living alone, and an actress, and intelligent so far beyond her years, she had been brought up in such ignorance of evil, and was so entirely without experience of the world and its ways, that though she had wept over stories of man's treachery and woman's shame, it never occurred to her

to degrade herself and him .she adored, by any thought of vice in him or frailty in her. The chances of life and the accident of a few months back had made Violet an actress; but she had gone through none of the gradations or degradations which generally precede a début and a success in the highest branch of her profession; she had not learnt the finesse of acting from any intimacy with actors and actresses—she had never frequented the green-room or the side scenes—she was no protégée of any king of the drama, first teaching her, perhaps, with well practised art, to feel love, passion, jealousy, self-abandonment, and despair! and then from her own sad experience to realise in other characters, what she had felt in her own!

Violet, when she went upon the stage first, had never loved—had never had any instruction but from her reserved and respectable aunt.

The power of loving, and loving with her

whole soul, lay slumbering in her heart ; but the success of her Juliet, a success which on the London boards would have equalled Fanny Kemble's or Miss O'Neil's, arose from that power peculiar to impassioned natures and imaginative temperaments—the power of identifying herself completely and entirely with the object of her sympathy ; and the imaginary Juliet, actually, for the time being, felt the sudden growth in her own heart of passionate love for an imaginary Romeo ! not the commonplace ranter of rouge and chalk, who performed the part, but some vision of her girlish fancy, of whose wild and enchanting poetry, that spangled and buskined puppet was the interpreter !

So exquisite was her sensibility, and so powerful her imagination, that she could realise to herself both the love and the lover ; and as poor L. E. L. said when first she saw the sea, about which she had written so exquisitely before seeing it, that she should never have

said so much had she seen it first—so there was in Violet's personation of Juliet in love—Violet, who had never loved herself—an exquisite, an inspired, an almost angelic tenderness and purity which earthly love seldom exhibits, and which even Violet herself never pourtrayed with the same inspiration, after her own heart had yielded itself to earthly passion ...and experience of unhappy love had robbed her conception of Juliet of half its glad and fluttering ecstasy—and her words of tenderness were saddened in tone, and her looks of unutterable fondness dimmed somewhat by droppings from that fountain of tears which Love unlocks in every woman's heart, and draws from, alas! so largely and so often.

Violet then, as we have said, though an actress in public, and a poor unprotected girl, living alone in a mean lodging in private, was as innocent, nay as ignorant of evil and of this world, as when she played, a happy child, in the weed-grown and tangled thickets of the

once fair shrubberies of the old Manor House at home, or pored over her worm-eaten Shakespeare, in the broken bowers, or by the antique hearth of the Squire's ancestral and half-ruined abode.

She had loved Colonel Pevensey with all the fervor of a girl of an impassioned nature, and poetical temperament, in love for the first time, and in love, too, with the handsomest, the most dignified, stately, and, (when he chose it), bewitching man of his day—a man endowed with that sort of proud and protecting gentleness, that chivalrous courtesy and almost condescending and half melancholy sweetness, which awes while it wins—works upon woman's fancy with the idea of so much more feeling than is betrayed, and makes her look up (as to a being of a higher order) to the very man, who, uniting so strangely dignity and dejection, she worships as an idol, and yet longs to comfort and hang over, and minister to as a child.

She loved, and gave up her whole heart to

the new and delicious rapture of loving—the natural timidity of a young girl's love made her seek concealment, while the gushing enthusiasm of her tenderness compelled her to pour out her heart in those letters which Colonel Pevensey had attributed to Jeannetta—but in which the more wily and perhaps acute Symons detected a genius and a poetry which he felt no woman of his acquaintance possessed, except the young and friendless actress, whose *débüt* he had witnessed, and whom he loved from that hour with an evil, calculating, but intense passion, to which he had inwardly sworn to sacrifice everything...but himself.

He certainly had not calculated on such an obstacle as Violet's passionate predilection for Colonel Pevensey; but if anything would have added to his selfish and unscrupulous desire to possess Violet, it would have been the delight of triumphing over such a rival—a man he hated, as a bad parasite always hates the

patron to whom he clings, and against whom Symons, in his mean pride, bore many and many a grudge, and to whose natural envy and malice jealousy now added a new and poisoned sting.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE POOR COUSIN

SYMONS found his Colonel reclining in "slippered ease," with an expression of countenance, in which recent emotion was fast giving way to present self-complacency. He was pleased with himself, for what he regarded as an act of heroic self-denial, and he flattered himself, that he had conveyed his renunciation of poor Violet's love, in language calculated to raise

him in her estimation, and add, at once, to her love and her regret.

He had got over his dislike to discussing Jeannetta's refusal with Symons, for he felt what he instinctively knew, that Symons, (and all other men of taste would feel too,) far more proud of the love of so rarely gifted a girl as Violet, than of that of any other well-born, beautiful, and accomplished, but comparatively common-place young lady, like Jeannetta Orde.

And this was the triumph of genius, and of that exquisite grace, and diffusive sensibility, which generally accompanies that rarest of gifts...Miss Orde was more brilliantly beautiful than Violet, and had fortune, station, and all the advantages they give...and yet Colonel Penvensey's heart beat with a melancholy triumph, at the idea that Violet loved him, while the thought of Jeannetta's devotion had only excited a tender pity and a grateful softness...and Symon's bosom burned with jealous anguish as the

Colonel read him his letter to Violet, while he would only have inly sneered his contempt, and openly smiled his congratulations, had the Colonel confided to him the conquest of any other woman, or women, in the world...however lofty in rank, or eminent for beauty.

"I do not see that I can say more than that, Symons," said Colonel Pevensey, wiping a tear from his eyes "if, after that, she will throw herself in my way, on her own beautiful head be the sin and shame, if such it be, that must follow. I think I am doing more than one man in a million could or would do in such a case; but whatever the sweet child may think, I am no angel; and even now, if you are not quickly off with my letter, I shall be tempted to throw it into the fire, fling all my virtuous resolutions to the dogs, and rushing to the darling girl, give way to this bewildering impulse, and call it destiny—fate—or what you will!"

"As she would doubtless do too," sneered Symons.

" For when weak women go astray,
Their stars are more in fault than they.

" You don't seem satisfied, Symons ; is there anything else I can say, think you ?"

" Well, since you ask me, Colonel, I think, if you really wish to save the girl, it is a pity you have written in a manner, calculated to increase her silly passion to the wildest pitch, to inflame her fond imagination, and make her think no sacrifice would be too great, for a being so sublimely heroic, and so bewitchingly tender ; I only know, if I were a woman in love with you, and you wrote me such a letter, it should be " all for love, and the world well lost," with me ; and in five minutes, I would be here !"

" There is something, certainly, in what you say, Symons, but I do not see how I can, as a gentleman and a man of feeling, write harshly to a poor child of Violet's sensibility, one too,

whose only fault, is the loving me too well!"

"Nay, Colonel, I never dreamt of your writing *harshly* to her, but if you had not made yourself appear so loveable, while withdrawing as a lover, and so spared the girl's *amour propre*, while, in fact, casting her away for ever, I think you would have carried out your praiseworthy object better; as it is, I own, I doubt whether you will not rather accelerate, and ensure the catastrophe you wish to prevent."

"Well, I am quite unequal to the task you would impose on me, Symons; I wish to be a friend to the poor girl, not a brute—if you think that letter will do no good I'll destroy it, and call and see her...I wish you would take it, for in the first place, as I expect it will affect her deeply, I should not like common eyes to witness her emotion, and in the next I think you might slip in a few words of flattery and comfort, and, perhaps, prevent her giving

way to despair. Tell her I am quite as miserable as she is...that haughty relatives influence my actions—that I cannot offend them for the sake of my little ones—Say anything that can a little mitigate the first blow, and that shock well over, she will not be driven to any act of desperation—every hour that passes after some dreadful disappointment, silently and almost unconsciously to ourselves, reconciles us to our fates.”

“ Well, Colonel, there is nothing I would not do to oblige you, though of all visitors the most unwelcome, must be one who goes to announce to a woman the loss of all that made life lovely, and of all painful sights a beautiful woman in despair is the most so!”

“ Thank you, Symons, I never for a moment doubted your zeal—watch her every word, look, and tone—tell me how she bears it—after all, perhaps, it wont do—If you think it likely to break her heart, or bewilder her fine intellect, I must give in—things must take their

chance, and love must still be lord of all...I will sacrifice anything but her own health and reason; for really I do believe I am more fond of the girl than I was aware of."

Sacrifice everything!—Oh how light, and how selfish is the love of the man of pleasure and of the world. He never dreamt even if her love proved deep enough to destroy life or reason—he never dreamt of offering to make her, who so loved him, the wife of his bosom—No, he could contemplate sacrificing her name and fame, her honour in this world, and her hopes of a better, to his own aristocratic notions—but to sacrifice one jot of pride, or one iota of prejudice, that was so completely out of the question, that it never even occurred to him!

And so Symons took the letter after a plausible assurance to the Colonel, that though he did not profess to be immaculate, or better than other men, yet he was glad to have a hand in this good work, and that he should lay his head

on his pillow with a happy conscience, if he could be, however humbly, instrumental in saving for the profession she adorned, and ultimately for some noble and wealthy suitor, the pretty and clever creature, whose devotion to his Colonel gave her an interest and a charm in his eyes.

“ I do not wonder she loves you, Colonel,” he said, while tears of plausibility filled his prominent, light grey eyes; “ but in order to complete this noble sacrifice, and save her, you must not see her, you must keep out of the way, and not take the alarm too easily...hearts do not break now-a-days, and she is too well principled to think of suicide—So *au revoir*, dear Colonel—depend on me !”

With a beating heart and a stealthy step, but a step winged by jealousy, ardent love, and new born hope, Symons quickly traversed the road that divided him from Violet's lodging, and finding the street door open and no one in the way, he hurried stealthily up the stairs to

the little sitting-room, where he expected to find her.

The door of the room was ajar, and pushing it gently open, he stood on the threshold, and remained for some time, gazing in mute ecstasy on the figure of Violet, reclining, as we have described her, on the little old couch, on which she still slept.

He had never been fully aware before, of the delicate beauty of her head and face, and the Medicean perfection of her form. He sank into a chair near the door, to enjoy, at his ease, a picture so entrancing to any one, but to a passionate lover, hitherto unnoticed and disregarded, so bewildering!...on a little table, close to the chair he occupied, were drawing materials, and Symons, who had some skill as a draughtsman, intended to sketch the reclining figure of Violet, as a study for a sleeping Psyche, but just as he had seized a pencil, and opened a scrap book on the table, a letter,

in a manly hand, unfolded between the leaves attracted his attention.

It ran thus :—

“Do not despise me, Violet, that I have become a miserable private, in the very regiment, of which the Colonel is, I hear, one of your worshippers, and all the officers, more or less, your admirers—it is love for you, miserable man that I am, bewildering love for you ! that has sunk me thus !

“Maddened by your departure, I quarrelled with my brother, who adores you too, after his own gloomy and desponding fashion—I left my home, my father, my mother, resolved never to give up the search for Violet, while my wretched frame could drag itself after my restless and most miserable spirit—the tempter found me perishing of want. I sold my birth-right for a mess of pottage—in other words, I enlisted—and now I find myself at the beck and call, of those far less gentle of blood, and

refined in thought and feeling, than myself; the associate, too, daily and nightly, of the profligate, the low, the vulgar; constant restraint is now the portion of one, who ever till now roamed free as air; and ceaseless and degrading drudgery, the fate of him, whose sole occupations have hitherto been sports he delighted in, studies that enchanted him, and the exquisite and passionate joy of loving you!

“How am I to live and bear it?...I cannot desert; never will I bring so foul a blot on my unstained and ancient name; even if my poor father knew of my misery, and would buy me off, he has not the means; and I cannot bear to destroy his peace and my mother's, by telling him to what my mad devotion and headstrong passion has brought me.

“My life is intolerable, and one of its greatest curses is, the hearing profane and ribald lips name thy name, my Violet.

“They couple thee—and, oh! so as to make

my blood boil, and the spirit of Cain rise in my heart—with the gay and handsome Colonel of my regiment—a man they say, who never lets, 'I dare not wait upon, I will'—but let him pause; he does not survive thy fall, my cousin, my adopted sister! my adored one!...again I hear, and with a deeper shame, that one, Symons, a man beneath thee, every way... mean in birth, in person, in talents, and in character, but a sycophant of our Colonel's, and a pandert to his vices, has sworn thou shalt be his upon his own vile terms. Thou his paramour! angel of purity! Maiden in whose veins flows the blood of hundreds of generations of those who were lords of that soil, of which this miscreant was, I dare be sworn, a serf—He who would, but for the accidents of life, be far too much beneath thee, to dream of thee as his wife, he, I hear, boasts thou shalt be his mistress yet!—and this small miscreant, whom I long to fling to the ground and crush, the discipline of my odious profession, compels me—

to bow to, to bend before—to obey! often at his insolent command, the hot blood rises to my brow, and my hand burns to fell him where he stands; and what then, Violet! nothing but death—death I covet, I woo her as a bride—but oh! the thought of my father's bowed head, and my mother's broken heart... this thought brings me to myself—and I endure all; and I will endure all, sweet Violet, if you will send me one word of comfort of affection, of hope. Remember, fallen as I am, I am your cousin—and as I have lived only for you, so for you would I gladly die. These men who pour their poisonous flatteries in your ear; have they loved you as I have done—would they bear for you what I bear—no Violet, their object is to lower you, to trample on you—mine to rise even from my present mean estate, only to live or die at your feet, sole idol of my heart!—once more shun Colonel Pevensey; but shun more still his mean

parasite, the false-hearted Symons. I want to see you, if only for an hour to consult with you on my present disgraced and miserable position—and ascertain what you wish me to do—when shall I see you...one word...and let it be a kind one, for misery has made me desperate !

“Your wretched Cousin,

“VALENTINE WOODVILLE.”

With bitter and vindictive feelings Symons perused this letter, and inwardly he vowed to revenge himself, sooner or later, on the miserable writer who had already perhaps succeeded in prejudicing Violet against him—he who so wished to appear in her eyes as noble, gentle and unselfish, and to shine a brilliant contrast to the heartless and calculating object of her passionate and misplaced affection.

As he pondered these things with his brows

knit, his hands clenched, and his teeth set, a loud street organ suddenly set up a shrill "Herz mein herz," and Violet awoke with a wild scream...pushed back her hair, gazed distractedly about her, and seeing Captain Symons, drew her wrapper around her, seated herself with dignity on the sofa, and asked him with some hauteur, which her trembling voice and changing colour belied, what he wanted of her, and what brought him, unannounced, at that hour, into her apartment.

"I will soon alter that cold tone, and that proud look!" thought Symons, with a mean delight in the agony he was about to cause her; but he only smiled deferentially, and said: "I grieve to find myself unwelcome, Miss Woodhurst, but I meant not to intrude upon your solitude, or provoke your gentle spirit to anger and rebuke, I came here by Colonel Pevensey's desire, as his friend, and more still," here his voice faltered, and he turned away his head), "by my own desire as yours!"

As he spoke, taking out, as he did so, Colonel Pevensey's letter, every particle of colour forsook poor Violet's face—her white lips quivered, her frame trembled violently—She took the letter he offered, and said :

“ Thank you, I will peruse it at my leisure.”

“ I believe it is part of my duty, Miss Woodhurst, to remain here while you read it, to explain anything you may not quite understand, and to convey your answer at once to Colonel Pevensey—”

“ I think I must ask you to absent yourself, sir,” said Violet, timidly, “ while I make a toilet more suitable to such an occasion.”

“ Oh, certainly,” said Captain Symons, “ I will return in half an hour,” he bowed stiffly, and left the room.

He stopped at the bottom of the stairs, and the next minute a shriek and a heavy fall broke on his ear.

Captain Symons rushed back to Violet's room, Colonel Pevensey's letter was open in her hand, and she lay perfectly insensible and corpse-like on the floor.

CHAPTER XIV.

WOMAN'S REWARD.

It was with an ineffable, but almost trembling rapture, that Symons found himself alone with Violet in his arms. He loved her, and with that passion, which, even in the worst natures has an intensity and an exclusive devotion almost sublime!

He called for no assistance—but gently replacing her on the sofa—he hung over her, afraid of a return of consciousness which

would compel him to withdraw his enamoured scrutiny—He had never been very near her before, for Violet, always reserved in her manners with men, had, in addition to her natural timid dignity, an instinctive dislike to Symons. He had never succeeded more than once, in compelling her to shake hands with him, and then the cold moisture of his tight and protracted grasp haunted her for hours after; till this morning, though he had always thought her beautiful, he had never known, how beautiful she was, for she really was like a delicate flower, which the more closely it is examined the more exquisite does it appear.

He now for the first time perceived the silken and glossy texture of her rippled and golden hair, the smoothness and the sheen of her fair skin—

“ So clear that you might see the blue veins start,
Bearing, like rivers, their rich offering
To that pure ocean, her devoted heart.”

The filbert shape of the transparent nails of her taper fingers, so fair and thorough-bred—the curve of her white throat—the waist

“Small by degrees and beautifully less,”

and the foot which, like that of Clarissa Harlowe, was as delicate and white as the hand of any other woman, and which invited the touch almost as does an infant's, with its roseate hue and velvet texture.

Symons could have gazed on her for hours, and every hour have discovered some new charm; and in the gratification of his selfish pleasure, he quite forgot the danger of a syncope so protracted and so entire. His dread was, not that she would awake no more, but that she would awake too soon, and though *he* abstained from touching with his lips, the long unbound and fragrant tresses which hung over his arm in golden ripples, some spirit that watches o'er

the pure in heart, sent the returning blood suddenly back to Violet's cheek, and with a shudder and a shriek she opened her eyes and met the prominent, pale blue orbs of Symons, (with their large lids and white lashes) fixed searchingly upon her.

Instinctively she drew her wrapper around her and raising herself from a recumbent to a sitting posture said,

"Captain Symons, I know not how or why you are here, but you will oblige me much by immediately withdrawing."

"I am here, Miss Woodhurst," said Symons (with a melancholy deference which his great tact taught him would serve him best with her.)

"I am here, in the humble hope of being of some little use to you, some little comfort. I was leaving the house when I heard a faint shriek and a heavy fall—little as I see you esteem me, I thought you might prefer my attentions, in so delicate a case, to those of strangers and...I have watched you as a brother

might have watched a sister...do not look so coldly, so doubtingly on me ; from the bottom of a heart, purified by your image, Violet ! I pity as much as I reverence you !”

“ I do not know sir, by what right you talk to me of pity,” said poor Violet, drawing herself up, and trying to swallow down the tears that nearly choked her.

“ By the right,” said Symons with dignity, of a devotion so sacred and so pure that you might be as proud to inspire, as I am to feel it.”

“ Are you in the confidence of Colonel Pevensey ?” timidly asked Violet, blushing deeply.

“ I am !”

“ Then you know—” sobbed the poor girl, in a passion of tears...“ you know—”

“ I know that you have made an idol, and have found it clay...I know you have invested, with all the romantic attributes of a poetical fancy and a virgin heart, a man, honourable,

kind, well-meaning, and to whom I am much attached, but who, (forgive me,) is so far from being the lofty creation you imagine, that he is incapable even of conceiving, what he would call a sublime absurdity!—the man to reciprocate and to appreciate such a love as yours, Violet! should be, not a man of pleasure, *blasé* with enjoyment, not a man of the world looking at all things through a worldly medium—not a middle-aged man, twice a widower, who has exhausted, in a thousand flirtations, liaisons, intrigues, and *affaires de Cœur*, the small power of loving, with which Nature had endowed him, when she gave him a form and face, a voice and manner, so irresistibly captivating to all woman-kind, that even in the autumn of his charms, all women, from the duchess down to the grisette, throw away their affections upon him—and to my certain knowledge the rejecting of advances, the crushing of hopes, and the evading of attentions, takes up a great part of his time—and often embitters his temper.”

Nothing could sting poor Violet more sharply, or mortify her more completely than this artful and bitter speech, intended, not only, to strip the object of her adoration of all the attributes that could excuse, in her own eyes, the devotion she had lavished on him, but by classing her and her attachment with a host of others, importunate and wearying in the extreme, making the first passionate love of an unselfish heart, assume, to her own eyes, the air of a common-place impertinence, which its idolised object considered a nuisance and a bore!

He knew full well how rapidly she would connect, in her own mind, Colonel Pevensey's farewell (however speciously worded and eloquently expressed,) with the many other advances he had been obliged to discourage, the host of other hopes he was compelled to crush, the other attentions he had found so wearisome!...All light left her eyes, all spirit forsook her voice and manner at this sudden degradation, both of her idol and herself!

She was so lost in painful and humiliating reflections that she did not perceive that Symons, hope sparkling in his eyes and flushing his cheeks, as the pale hues of despair stole over her, drew his chair nearer and nearer to her, and at last got possession of her cold and trembling hand. His touch, however, recalled her to herself. She hastily withdrew her hand, and rose with a natural and maiden dignity and resentment which would have touched any heart but Symons's; but as her eyes met his, (his in whose searching glance a saucy intelligence was mixed with an admiration so unrestrained as to be almost insulting,) she sank again into her seat, and burying her face in her hands, burst into an agony of tears.

No man can stand the passionate tears of a woman he really loves, and Symons, almost unconsciously to himself, threw himself on his knees before Violet, and exclaimed:

"Weep not! weep not, my lovely, my adored one! or rather weep on a bosom which has

been all your own, since the first moment your form gladdened these eyes, and your sweet, young voice awoke a heart which had slumbered till then—rend your virgin fancy, sweetest Violet, from one whose years more than double thine, and whose heart is even older than those years!—the young should only love the young, Violet, *I* should value one kind word, one gentle smile, one look of sympathy, of regard—I dare not say of affection—more than that stately, middle-aged coxcomb would, the entire resignation of your whole being to his condescension—his pity.”

“His condescension! his pity!” gasped Violet. “Captain Symons you degrade yourself, far more than you do Colonel Pevensey or even me, by the heartless and malignant treachery, of inuendoes like these. With regard to age *he is, what he is*, and being what he is, I, in spite of all you would imply, believe him to be one for whom a woman might be proud to live, and prouder still to die! there

are autumns Captain Symons, far more brilliant than a cold, cutting spring. If that great and gifted being, is indeed in the autumn of his noble life, I only regret it, because, (lovely as autumn may be) it is winter's neighbour, and with winter ends the year. You have sought to humble me because I love, and love in vain ; but listen, since you *do* know my sad secret, not I firmly believe, through *his* betrayal, but through your own matchless guile, you shall know all ; I glory in that love, all unreturned, unwelcome, and most unhappy as it is, far, far more than I ever could do, in the most prosperous attachment for any other being of this wretched earth. So kind, so noble, so full of honour and of feeling is the very farewell you have so sought to embitter, while so artfully pretending to soften it, that I am proud of it, and proud of Col. Pevensey, whose noble spirit breathes in every line. Yes, I feel far less degraded by this withdrawal of his love, than by the offer of yours ! and in spite of all you

have, with a treachery so wily, implied against him whose confidence you have gained (you best know how!) so far from lowering him in my esteem you have lowered none but yourself—and I would rather, were he in poverty or trouble, toil for him day and night, and were he prosperous wear my heart out in prayers to Heaven to keep him so, I would rather worship him unknown, unheeded and apart, and if discovered die at his feet, than sit with you, (or any like you,) on the throne of the world. Go! You now know all! Go and show to others that bitter smile, that mocking eye...I ask but one boon of you, and that I will enforce—that I see you here no more!”

As Violet spoke with passionate energy and bitter scorn, all the softness and humanity of love left Symons' bosom, and nothing remained but the burning sensation of a passion made up of desire, of jealousy and of revenge; a deadly fire lighted his eyes, a demoniac sneer curled his lip, over which, as over his cheek an

ashy whiteness stole. For some moments he was silent, his hands nervously closed and unclosed, and his whole frame trembled so, that he feared to trust himself to speak...at length he rose, laughed a light scornful laugh, and said,

“ Miss Woodhurst, there is an old saying, and (like all old sayings) a very true one...that nothing so completely ensures a woman's going to the ... deuce, as any attempt to keep her from it. Had I thought of this, (as I really wished you well) I should not have dreamt of interposing between you and the fate you are courting. With regard to your abuse of me, I look upon it as the venomous-outpouring of the passion of a wrongheaded and disappointed woman—but fear not any further urging on my part, of the half-playful suit with which I endeavoured to wile away your thoughts from your unhappy and ill-requited attachment, just as I would give a child sweetmeats to make him give up a penknife; the sweetmeats might do

him no good...but the penknife must do him a great deal of harm. However, be tranquil, any little fancy for you, the offspring of pity, which I have expressed this morning, has quite passed away since I have heard you in a manner, (forgive me), so unfeminine proclaim your spaniel-like determination to love on, and hope on, come what will—and since with regard to sitting with me on the throne of the world, you have covered yourself with the ridicule of saying ‘no,’ before you were asked, I am much mistaken if you would not some day, and that soon, kneel and weep to recal those words (which I shall set in a note-book against you), and kneel and weep in vain!...I wish you a very good morning.”

So saying, Symons left Violet alone in her anguish. Alone with Pevensey’s letter, and the memory of all the bitter things which Symons had said, and which, coupled with the evident desire Colonel Pevensey betrayed to put a barrier between them, drove her alter-

nately into fits of passive dejection and active despair. She sate poor girl for hours and hours together, conjuring up with torturing ingenuity every thought that could goad and mortify her; at last out of the hosts of maddening fancies which seemed to dart through and whirl round her brain, she was conscious of only one—namely that her love was wearisome and unwelcome to Colonel Pevensey, and that he wished to repulse her as too forward and avoid her as too fond!

Rapidly she paced up and down her little room, as if she could walk away from this degrading thought. Sometimes she stopped, opened her desk, seized a pen, and began to defend herself and upbraid him; then she tore what she had written, and tried to be calm, to kneel, to pray...but in vain, she could not withdraw her thoughts from the creature, and she felt it was a mockery with a pre-occupied heart to address herself to the Creator. None who

have not loved, and been, or thought themselves for that very love, despised—misunderstood, and avoided—can form to themselves any idea of what Violet suffered in that long and dreadful day.

CHAPTER XV.

"PATIENCE," THE MAID OF ALL WORK.

AFTER Symons was gone no one came near poor Violet. Her landlady was ill, and the wretched little maid of all-work, accustomed only to enter Violet's room, when rung for, and, having now the duties of a nurse, added to those of footman, cook, and housemaid, found no time to leave her exacting, discontented, and raving mistress, whose complaint was a

sort of *delirium tremens*, brought on by addiction to the gin-bottle, the great destroyer of the souls and bodies of our humble neighbours. Violet, sick with weeping and fasting, weary with incessant and rapid walking up and down her room, shivering and yet fevered, the window open, though a cold east wind blew into the apartment, the hearth black with the ashes of a former fire, the small room unswept, unarranged, untouched, during the whole day, and looking as desolate and forlorn as its unhappy inmate, Violet felt, by degrees, steal into her mind that wish to die, and be forgotten, which so soon, from passive despair, becomes active desperation, and suggests the first thought of suicide to the mind.

This thought, this dreadful haunting thought, came to poor Violet's frenzied brain she knew not how, nor whence, nor wherefore; but there it was, now tempting her to rush out, and fling herself, warm and palpitating with life,

into the rolling sea, now to dash herself from some giddy height, now to drain some poisoned cup. Every hour the impression that she *must* die, grew stronger, every hour the demon of suicide painted life in darker hues, and death in softer tints.

She had no engagement that night at the theatre, had she had one she could not have fulfilled it...at length a light danced under her door, and played on the wall of her room, there was a gentle knock at her door oftentimes repeated. Violet, ashamed of the self-abandonment of her despair and her disordered appearance, smoothed her wild hair and arranged her ruffled dress, and then said "come in."

It was Patience, the poor little maid of all-work; she had in her hand a tray with a cup of hot tea and a plate of toast nicely made. She was a very small and rather interesting looking girl of sixteen...with a prominent and clever-looking forehead, large

melancholy dark eyes, and pretty teeth ; but in her appearance, was that rare and painful mixture, only seen in maids of all work and factory girls ; for while spare diet and hard work had kept her stature and her form to the size and development of a child's, they had marked her face with hues and hollows of care, of distress, and of thought belonging to advanced age. Her arms were very long, and her fingers knotty and sinewy, like an old woman's.

The habit of nursing and carrying heavy children, while yet a frail child herself, had curved her spine, raised one shoulder, and caused a sort of limp in her gait ; her complexion was sodden, and of a greenish hue, and her hair, which nut-brown and fine, had been her mother's pride and care, in those happy days, long ago, when she had a mother, was cut short, by the order of her harsh and tyrannical mistress ; but it would rear itself into many a spiral curl, and was not unbecoming, though wild.

She wore a short-waisted, short-skirted, old black, stuff frock; and loving Violet, and knowing her detestation of dirt and untidiness, she had washed her pale face with yellow soap till it shone; brushed her hair, and put on a clean little white apron, which Violet had given her.

She said:

“ Oh, Miss, I began to be afeard you was took'd bad; I thought you was out till I heard you move, and that was two hours ago; but I couldn't stir, till I'd got missus to bed; and she wouldn't go till she'd stupefied herself. I'm afeard Miss, you've overheard her a cussing and wearing at me like mad, and yet I've been on foot, and waiting on her like a gallows' slave, since four this morning. Well, she's sound at last, thank goodness—and no sooner did she snore, than I slipped away to get my tea—I've had nothing all day—and then, thinking you must be starving, Miss, I've given you the best cup, and made

you this bit of toast—and now, do take it, Miss, do’ee, for indeed, you looks more dead than alive, as white as a sheet, and as cold as a stone—drink the tea, Miss, [do!—it’s good and it’s hot, though I says it as shouldn’t, seeing I made it. While you sups it, I’ll light you a bit of fire, and tidy your room a bit.”

“No, no! poor girl,” languidly exclaimed Violet. “Think of yourself, your mistress will wake, and then you will get nothing.”

“No, no, Miss! fair play’s a jewel; if she wakes before I’ve had my fire and one hour’s good sleep, I’ll give her warning; one must have the patience of a *Jove*, to bear any more rowing and bellowing to-night. Do miss, drink the tea, and eat the leastest mite of toast, just to hearten you up a bit!”

To oblige the poor girl, Violet tried to obey; while she did so, little Patience cheerily lighted a bright fire, swept up the hearth, closed the

windows, drew down blinds and curtains, *tidied*, to use her own expression, the little room, drew the sofa to the fire and gently compelling Violet to lie down on it, she brought a pillow and a quilt from her bed, and laid her to rest, as a mother might a child ; she coaxed, implored, and tormented Violet into drinking the tea, and swallowing a little bread and before long, the warmth of the fire, and the soothing effect of the warm beverage, acted on the wearied mind and frame of Violet, and she sank to sleep.

Patience, thoughtless of herself, continued to "tidy the room," till everything was in order, and till she had changed a den of desolation and discomfort, into a neat and cheerful little retreat.

"And now," murmured Patience, "that poor Miss is a little comfortable, I'll go and get my own tea, for I'm fit to sink into the hearth."

Alas! alas! at that moment her wretched mistress, angrily, loudly, and repeatedly rung her bell, and it was some hours before the unhappy, overtasked child, could escape again from her horrible task-mistress.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HEART'S MISGIVINGS.

It was with a haunting anxiety (at which Colonel Pevensey himself was astonished,) that he awaited the return of Symons. But Symons, who hated his patron, was always rejoiced when, without exciting any suspicion of ill-will, he could inflict on him any pang, in return for those he constantly endured, from the scorching jealousy, the gnawing envy, and

the hoarded hate, that made his bosom a very den of fiends.

Violet's scorn of himself, and her passionate devotion to Colonel Pevensey—her bitter words, and her disdainful looks, triumphed over the habitual and well-assumed calm of his air and manner, and he felt that nothing but violent and overwhelming exercise, ending in mental and bodily prostration, could enable him to play his part to perfection, in his approaching and inevitable interview with his patron.

One of the Colonel's horses was always at Symons's service; and on this occasion, Symons chose the fleetest and most spirited of his stud. He controlled himself and his impatience, until he was a mile or two out of sight of Brighton, and out of all danger of meeting any of its loungers and then the daring horseman touched the chesnut satin flank of his impatient steed, with a light stroke of his whip, and the noble creature, whose only wish was to fly across the downs, sped

away, with his agitated and excited burden, and bore him along with a velocity, in the physical excitement of which, all sense of the hell within his bosom, was lost for a time—when at length Symons presented himself, in Colonel Pevensey's drawing-room, all traces of agitation were gone. He had made his wonted careful and gentlemanly toilet, and had re-assumed the habitual half-saucy nonchalance of his general manner, a nonchalance which only changed into earnest and affectionate deference, in the presence of Colonel Pevensey.]

Colonel Pevensey, whose native goodness of heart and fervour of imagination, even the career of a man of pleasure and of fashion, had not quite destroyed, had endured all day that sort of restless impatience, which, certainly, is one of the features of incipient love—he thought he had done well and wisely, in saving a creature, whose conscience he felt to be as sensitive, as her affections were ardent,

from the peril of her own devotion, and his commonplace love. But sometimes, he feared he had acted harshly by a being so gentle—and sometimes, he almost regretted that he had trusted to Symons a mission so serious, so delicate, and so dangerous. Symons, like all characters, false and hollow in themselves, however specious and fascinating in appearance, could not stand the test of deliberate reflection and earnest scrutiny—his character certainly did not blossom and thrive in the garden of memory—no hypocrite's does—and again and again Colonel Pevensey groaned, to think he had exposed poor Violet's angelic purity, and passionate idolatry, perhaps, to the unfeeling taunts and sneers of a heartless man—perhaps to a pity and condolence, which might wound, but could not comfort.

“Poor child! poor, dear, adorable girl,” he muttered to himself again and again, as he paced up and down his room, “to what have I, perhaps, exposed her, merely for loving me, as,

I do believe, I have never, never been loved before—not from a flattered vanity, awakened by my notice, not from any woman's pride, in winning one, for whose favor, so many fools contend—not from one thought of interest, or dream of ambition—but from the first involuntary, uncalculating, absorbing love of a maiden whose brilliant genius invests her idol with every lovely attribute—and whose pure, though passionate heart, makes her love of that idol, (alas of clay), akin to idolatry!... And yet what choice had I—we meet on such unequal grounds—I am no boy, to love her as she loves me...content to sit by her side. or *fler le parfait amour* at her feet—a sighing swain—a Damon, or a Corydon, who can live months on a look, and years on a sigh! —I am not heartless, selfish, worldly enough to make her, what perhaps, her heavenly confidence in me, might render possible—but what would break her heart, when she understood her real position. There is but one alternative,

—to marry her!!! Oh madness! folly! How Lady Tunbridge would sneer; how the Duchess of D—— would quiz me—what would Sparkleton say—what a bye-word, and a jest should I be...at thirty-eight, knowing the world and its women as I do...to be caught, as if I were eighteen, by Cupid and Hymen...and seen pairing off, slinking away with a girl in her teens, an actress and a nobody! and then, my children, to give my Clarissa and my Marmaduke, an actress of seventeen for their mother. How can I tell, now in the first tender dawn of her beauty, what she may become; all very young creatures are graceful and endearing, but who can tell what changes, wealth and position, and ultimately a title, might effect in her, the parvenue might peep out! and fancy me wedded to a parvenue! my darlings, perhaps, the object of a parvenue's jealousy and hate. No, no! it shall never be, It is better as it is! . ”

So saying, and to strengthen his resolves,

Colonel Pevensey rang for his children, and tried to forget, while Clarissa twisted his rich hair round her rosy and taper little fingers, and while Marmaduke made him tell stories about soldiers, that perhaps poor Violet was sitting alone 'weeping those tears, the broken hearted weep.'

But it would not do, children, the loveliest, the most loving and the most beloved, may employ the mind, amuse, interest, but they cannot engross the heart, and least of all, that heart in which passion has begun to awaken any of its exacting, bewildering, and ever haunting emotions.

Colonel Pevensey thought of Violet's eyes, swimming in tears, as he looked into those, scarcely clearer in their hazel depths, or more seraphic in their child-like tenderness, but, oh! how much happier in their gentle confidence and peace, than poor, poor Violet's—as he kissed his Clarissa's spotless brow, his thoughts would

wander to that seat of high thought and gentle sadness, which he had felt glow with delight, and then grow chill with deep emotion, when, more in gallantry than love, he had pressed it with his careless lips. He thought of Violet's sunny and redundant tresses, with their rare and golden ripples, as Clarissa's pretty locks fell on his shoulders—and when he pressed her to his heart, all doting father as he was, he felt there was yet a void there, which none but Violet's Psyche form and passionate tenderness, could really fill.

“What are you thinking of, my own papa?” asked sweet Clarissa, with all the lurking jealousy of undivided attention, and the quick and watchful apprehension of her sex—“why do your beautiful eyes fill with tears? and why are you so pale? and why do you think, and think, and think, and then sigh, and not tell poor Clarissa what you are thinking about, or what you sigh for?”

Colonel Pevensey caught her to his heart, and sighed again.

“ Ah, there, you sigh still, and there is another tear in your dear, pretty blue eye—have I done anything to vex you?—I didn’t cry, though you havn’t sent for me all day—I didn’t cry, papa, though my heart was full of tears—because it vexes you, to see that I have cried—and though you forgot you had promised to ride with me, I didn’t complain, but rode just as you taught me, and as if you were by my side...and though I have been very unhappy indeed, I have taken such pains, I have got good marks for all I have done...and as I couldn’t think of anything else, I have written you a letter, to tell you not to care about me, if there is anything else you want to do, or like to do; and Miss Trevor says it is well written, and no bad fault, except tautology.”

“ The fault of all who love, my darling,

said her father. "Where is the letter?"

Clarissa took from the pocket of her little apron, a letter, sealed with three large seals and directed in round hand, bold and clear:

"THE HONOURABLE COLONEL PAVENSEY,

"18, Brunswick Square,

"Brighton,

"Sussex,

"England."

"Marmaduke sealed and directed it, papa," said Clarissa, blushing at her father's hearty laugh at the outward appearance of so tender an effusion.

"Yes, papa," cried the bold boy, "I wanted Clarissa to send it by the post, and put two stamps on it—for fear it should be too heavy for one—Miss Trevor has a box full of stamps, and I have directed it because I don't believe the post-man could read Clarissa's little, mean

writing—but Clarissa is such a sneak, papa; she wouldn't put it in the post, nor let me, though we passed the office—if I'd known she wouldn't put it in, I'd have knocked it out of her hand with my whip, and had it in a jiffey—I hate girls—they're such cowards, and blabs, and make-believes!"

"In spite of all that, which I think is very true, my boy, I hope you won't like them too well some day!"

"Not I, papa! they never come up with a bold face and a stout heart, and speak out like a man, and say what they mean; but they pout, and sneak, and pretend, and cry in a corner. Look at Clarissa—she's been all day ready to cry, because you forgot her; and when I thought she was going to write, and say so, she writes, to say she is very glad you were better amused, and hopes you'll never think of her, except when you've nothing else to do. If that isn't a story, what is, papa?—and if she isn't a sneak, there's no such thing!"

"I didn't mean to tell a story, papa," said Clarissa, looking up with appealing eyes and quivering lip. "I only meant that I would rather you forgot to send for me, than sent for me when—when—when you didn't want me!"

"Oh, you true woman!" said her father fondly kissing the head she buried in his bosom, "give me the letter."

"Such humbug!" said the boy, riding on his father's stick.

Colonel Pevensey read:

"My own dear, kind, beautiful papa! I love you so much, I thought you would have sent for me to pour out your tea. I do so love you, but you forgot your poor Clarissa; you forgot you had promised to ride with me, my dear papa, but I rode as well as I could; because I love you so, I mind all you say...I was very unhappy because you forgot me, but I did not cry because you are vexed when I cry, but pray do

not send for me if I am a trouble to you, and don't ride with me if it doesn't amuse you; I will always do all you tell me, and not cry if I can help it, but sit quiet and think of my own darling papa, and never vex him because I love him so.—I am, honored and dear papa, your dutiful child,

“CLARISSA PEVENSEY.”

“And never vex you because I love you so!” repeated her father, pressing her again and again to his heart, “and for the same reason, sweet, sweet child, I will never vex you—and how,” he thought, “how would it vex her in after years, were I not only to give her a step-mother, but that step-mother, an inexperienced girl whom I should love to distraction, and who would be every way unfit to introduce my girl, being a parvenue and an actress!”

To get rid of the depressing sense of sacrifice and sorrow Colonel Pevensey began to

romp with his children, and he was dancing wildly about the room with one in each arm, and both shrieking, the girl with fear, and the boy with glee, when Symons glided in.

The sight of his emissary quieted the Colonel in a moment; he placed the children on the floor, and tried to gather from Symons's face, what had occurred between him and Violet.

But Symons was a man who never allowed his eyes actually to encounter any others; all false characters avert their gaze.

"Go, my darlings," said the Colonel, "I want to be alone."

With the ready obedience so characteristic of affection, Clarissa rose, but the boy said,

"I want to stay."

"Clarissa too wants to stay," said her papa, "but she knows papa wants her to go."

"Oh, but she's only a girl."

"But she's a good girl, and that's the best thing this earth can shew."

"No, a good boy's a better thing," said the

young scapegrace, "and so here goes! I'm off first! come Miss Sneak!" and so saying, he bounded out of the room and Clarissa stole gently after him, having first pressed her father's hand to her lips.

CHAPTER XVII

MISREPRESENTATION.

"WELL, Symons," said Colonel Pevensey, "how did she bear it?"

"At first like 'a woman scorned,'" said Symons. "She was in a deuce of a rage..."

"A rage!" said the Colonel, "Well, that's a relief, her grief would have touched me; but as for rage *je m'en moque* !...Then you don't think she's cut up about it?"

“ Why, I can’t say that exactly, I don’t think she’s at *all* the unsophisticated piece of devoted sympathy we both thought her, I fancy she’d laid a snare for your hand as well as your heart, Colonel, and that ambition and interest, as well as love...that sort of love actresses feel for a handsome man of fashion and fortune, all are upset...I’d a fine scene with her when she really discovered that it was ‘ no go ’; but I think I’ve done you the service of uprooting all hope, and I suspect she’ll soon get over it. She thought it necessary to go off into a fainting fit, and while so engaged, I saw a letter open on the table from her handsome cousin—that insolent jackanapes, Sharpe enlisted and has such trouble with...The fellow it seems is her cousin, and in love with her, and she, I suppose, had encouraged him before she found or fancied she could make a better market of herself...Well, he abuses you, and even me, roundly...I don’t think he’s safe...I shall give Sharpe a hint to watch him...but I dare say

she'll smile on him again now !...a sad descent though for the proud little puss, from a Colonel to a private...Perhaps, to break the fall, her affections will halt with me for a week or two ...I saw some symptoms of it...at any rate do not you fear...*Elle se consolera !*"

" *Tant mieux,*" said Colonel Pevensey, turning away, but with a sickening sense of mortification and of anger against Violet, himself, and above all, Symons.

Oh what a frightful power have the words of one man on the heart of another, and often on the destiny of a woman !

Colonel Pevensey did not pause to enquire whether all this was probable, he did not even remember for a moment the distrust he had felt when reflecting on the character, of this very man, whose lies now outweighed so heavily, in Pevensey's mind, all Violet's tenderness and truth. The picture his cunning and vindictive informant had drawn irritated Colonel Pevensey's pride, wounded his vanity, and outraged

the real tenderness, poor Violet, unaided by aught but truth and loveliness, and love, had awakened in a heart so little susceptible of soft emotions...So little, because he had had so many love affairs, and so little love!...because, since his fleeting fancy for Jeannetta (a fancy arising chiefly from his attributing to her all the exquisite genius and tenderness Violet had poured into her letters and her song,) love and woman had been wearisome to him—and because nothing less than the truth, the *naïveté*, the devotion, the gifted mind, and the passionate heart of Violet Woodville could have awakened in him that delight he had hardly ever tasted; not the delight of being loved, but the far greater and more exquisite enjoyment of loving!...La Bruyère says: “ *On est plus heureux par l’amour qu’ on a, que par celui qu’ on inspire!*” And certainly if anything can tint the arid landscape of life with a roseate hue, it is the purple light of that love which makes the heart itself a sort of sun whence floods of glory are shed

on all around—The love we inspire, but do not share, is only a gratification to the vanity; but the love we feel, and believe to be mutual is

“ The all
Of Paradise that has survived the fall !”

But if it is so beguiling an ecstasy in its happier moments, how bitter is its disappointment, how harrowing its despair. The true lover, has no neutral tints on his palette, it is all bright and dazzling, gorgeous and golden, or dark and dismal—impenetrable gloom! Colonel Pevensey was himself surprised at the sickness of heart, with which he felt that idol uprooted, whom he had so complacently and calmly resolved to dethrone!

When Symons suggested the probability of Violet's having ever encouraged her cousin Valentine Woodville, a deadly jealousy of the poor young soldier, so young, so forlorn and so beautiful in the Narcissus-like delicacy of

nineteen, rose in Colonel Pevensey's heart; and when the light blue balls of Symons's eyes twinkled under his bushy light eye-lashes and large white lids, as he suggested the possibility of her finding solace in him; the Colonel felt inclined to dash him to the earth, and trample him under foot!

But he only laughed and repeated Symons's words '*elle se consolera.*' and but for the ashy whiteness of his lips and cheeks, and the almost nervous sob, that seemed to stifle that light laugh, Symons would not have had the luxury of knowing that he had made the man, he so hated, mad with jealousy, and sick with disappointment, and wretchedly in love with the woman he had insulted, resigned, and estranged for ever!

CHAPTER XVIII.

SOLITUDE AND SORROW.

VIOLET, exhausted in mind and body, slept many hours, by the bright fire, which poor little Patience (the *child* of all work) contrived, in spite of the threats and curses of her inebriated and terrible mistress to keep alive, through the night—when at length the wretched girl awoke to a full sense of all the mortification, the misery, and the shame she had brought

upon herself—when she recalled all Symons's dreadful words, and more dreadful inuendoes, and, amid sobs and groans and stifled shrieks realised to her breaking heart, the fact, not only that her love was not returned but that it was, (with that of many others) despised, derided, and avoided; consciousness became so intolerable, that an insane desire to die, a false and frantic notion, common to the passionate despair of youth and love, that she could cease at once to *be*, and to feel, urged her to rush out into the cold grey morning and from the heights of some dizzy cliff, to throw herself into the boiling dashing waves.

As this terrible longing grew into a settled plan. She tried to raise herself on the sofa... and as she did, so she became, for the first time, aware that deadly chills, benumbed her limbs, while her head seemed on fire—that her brain reeled, her frame shook, and that she had no power to stand, or even to sit upright—racking pains in her head, feelings of sickness and

all the horrible forerunners of brain fever assailed her at once—but above, far above all her agonies, acute as they were, was the ever recurring sense of despised, rejected, and still adoring love. If I can but make these wretched limbs bear me to some spot, whence I can dash myself into ——, what?—Oh Violet! Oblivion! or eternity of anguish!—At the thought, the salutary thought, snatches of hymns, of prayers, and of precepts, learnt from the book of truth, in the long ago, stole into her mind, and broke from her lips... and tears, tears that perhaps saved her soul, gushed forth abundantly.

She sank on her knees, and buried her face in her pillow, and gasped forth—

“ ‘Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil!’ Oh, am I fit to die! ‘As the tree falleth so shall it lie.’ ”

She remained some time in deep and fervent prayer; and then she rose, and thinking she should breathe more freely by the wild sea,

but no longer with any impious thought of self-destruction, she tried to cross her room, in order to get her cloak and bonnet from the adjoining bed-room; but Violet was far more ill than she was aware of. She had scarcely risen with the intention of walking across the room, when her brain reeled, her limbs gave way, and she fell heavily to the floor, to all appearance lifeless.

It was about five o'clock in the morning, and a grey and cheerless light was struggling into the room. Poor little Patience, who even at that early hour was up, sweeping, scrubbing, and scouring, happened to be hard at work in the room under Violet's. She heard the fall, and she rushed up-stairs. She did not scream or cry, for she had from her cradle been used to act, and to think; she knew that her drunken mistress was the only creature in the house besides themselves...and that she would only impede and torment. So death-like was poor Violet's face, so still her pulse, and so

cold her hand, her brow, her bosom, that Patience felt a terrible fear steal over her heart, that her dear, beautiful young lady as she called her, was dead.

She tried bathing her face with water, opening the window, holding a smelling-bottle to her nose, burning feathers, and all other similar expedients; she then wisely laid her head upon the floor, level with her form, and darted out in search of medical assistance.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE YOUNG DOCTOR.

PATINCE rang in vain at the houses of two or three surgeons. One did pop out a white cotton night-cap, but seeing a miserable-looking child, with bare arms and neck, and a shock head, he suggested it was a *gratis* case, and so he popped his head gently in again, silently fastened his window, and stole back to his bed. At length, at a door on which

figured in large letters on a brass plate Dr. Hegner, Surgeon, &c., Patience saw a young, foreign-looking man, with a pair of large moustachios, and wrapped up in a cloak—he had evidently just returned to his home.

Patience called just as he was opening his door; and the shrill terror of her voice arrested his attention. She soon made him understand what she wanted; and when the young man heard that it was Miss Violet Woodhurst, the actress, whose state had so alarmed the poor little maid-of-all-work, he felt and expressed a lively concern and anxiety.

He made Patience wait while he provided himself with all he thought likely to be of use, and asked her many questions as he followed her to the house where Violet lodged.

“Is there a sweetheart in the case, my girl?” asked the young doctor.

“Oh, no, sir—Miss Woodhurst is above any such nonsense—she aint one of that kind,” said Patience, who, shrewd beyond her years,

had her suspicions of the case, but too much love for Violet, and too much of the *esprit de corps* of her sex, to betray any surmise which had floated through her precocious heart, and clever head.

"Why she's a pretty girl, and an actress," said the young doctor, "and all the men are in love with her, why shouldn't she have a sweetheart if she liked—nay for that matter, half-a-dozen if she chose!"

"Why, because she's as particular and as proud as any lady in the land—she's as good as Queen Wictoria or Queen Hadelaide, or the Duchess of Kent, and as proud too, though she is an actress, or was, poor dear lady!" sobbed Patience, "for perhaps by this time she ain't nothing but dust and hashes. Oh my! Oh my!"

"That we will soon ascertain," said the young Doctor, following Patience to Miss Woodhurst's room; she lay just where Patience had left her, and seeing this, the poor child

threw herself on her knees beside her, and sobbed aloud, and wrung her hands. But the young Doctor's more experienced eye soon discovered symptoms of life, suspended but not extinct, and at the end of half-an-hour he had succeeded in restoring some degree of consciousness, and in awaking her from her deadly syncope.

In spite of all Patience's cunning assertions, Violet's wanderings soon betrayed to the young Doctor something of what was passing in her mind, though as she called alternately on Colonel Pevensey, Captain Symons and Valentine Woodville, and mistook him by turns for each and all, he could not satisfactorily ascertain which of them had had power to darken her bright intellect and scatter her sweet senses! With the invaluable aid of clever and efficient little Patience, he applied leeches to her temples, administered what medicines he thought necessary, and got her to bed, and then he took his seat by her bedside and

watched her as a mother watches a beloved infant, a skilful physician a curious case, and an artist his beau ideal of loveliness.

Poor little Patience, delighted with his skill, his kindness and his zeal, took him at once into her especial favour. She told him all she thought he ought to know, of the beautiful and kind young lady, he was watching with an interest fast deepening into devotion. She got him to write an excuse for Violet's non-appearance at the theatre. She was to have played Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons" that very evening; and was delighted when he suggested the adding a medical certificate of severe and even dangerous illness; at Patience's request he visited her wretched old mistress who was stamping and raving to the destruction of all hopes of getting Violet quiet, and yelling aloud for brandy and for gin. He administered a judicious antidote in a glass of her favourite liquid fire, and ere long her turbulent

spirit was quiet for a time. When all fear of interruption, from her dreaded task mistress, was at an end, Patience, who knew that the young Doctor had not broken his fast, brought him a comfortable little breakfast to Violet's bedside, and then, satisfied that her favorite was in good hands, went gaily about her thousand avocations as maid of all work in a lodging-house, where attendance was included, and no washing put out.

And day stole on, the wretched day in which burning with fever, and the agonies of her mind, only to be guessed from her moans, her shrieks, and her convulsive clutching at the bed-clothes, Violet tossed her aching frame wildly about, and threw herself from one side of the bed to the other...and anon sate up, her eyes on fire, her cheeks crimson, her hair floating wildly about her, and rocked herself to and fro, nursing her agony as if it were a babe at her breast.

About noon, Captain Symons called. Petience did not quite know, though she more than half suspected, Violet's secret...but she did know that Captain Symons was odious to her—that she had overheard Miss Woodhurst speaking in bitterness and distress to him, and he retorting in anger and contempt—and she did know, that it was after a long interview with this odious and supercilious wretch, that she had found poor Violet in a state of such prostration and self-abandonment.

She therefore resolved, seconded by the young doctor, to whom she revealed her suspicions, that, come what would, Captain Symons should not be admitted—and assuming an air of unconsciousness, and practised, alas! in the fashionable lie of “not at home,” she came down stairs, just as he was rushing up, and told him Miss Woodhurst was gone out, to spend the day with a friend.”

Disappointed and enraged, Captain Symons

hit poor little Patience, a sharp cut with his riding whip, across her naked arm—and when she exclaimed:

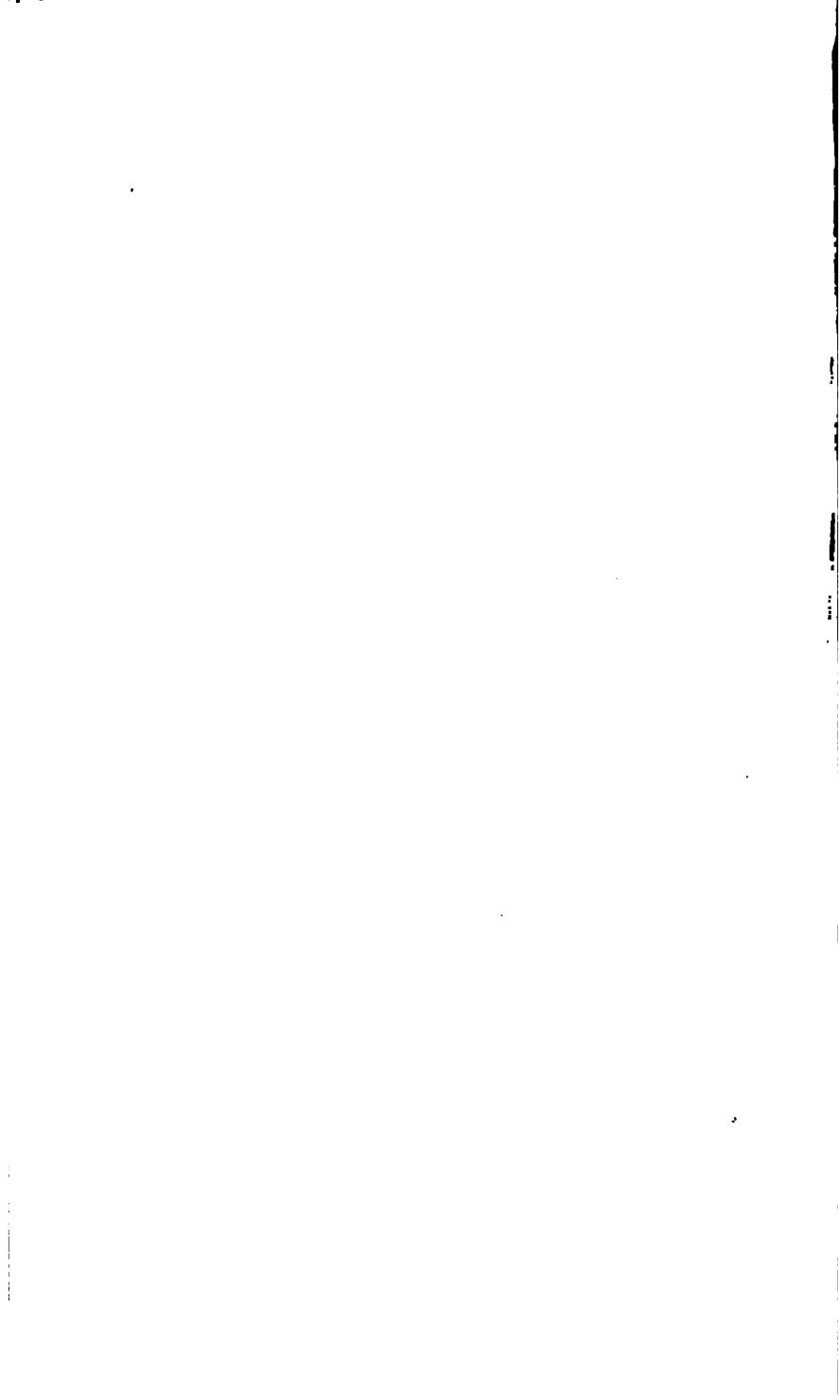
“What do you do that for, sir? am I here to be knocked about by you?”

He savagely pulled her ear, and grinning said, imitating her tone:

“Yes, you are; and whenever you tell me bad news, with a broad grin, I’ll make you smart for your pains!”

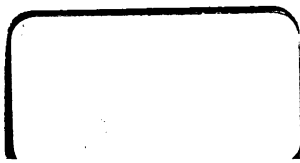
So saying, and muttering something about serving Miss Woodhurst the same, if she provoked him, he, nothing doubting the truth of Patience’s statement, took his leave, and Patience stole to Violet’s bedside, to tell the dear young doctor how cleverly she had got rid of the “ruffin,” and to shew him the brutal cut, which had marked her poor lean arm with a scarlet wale.

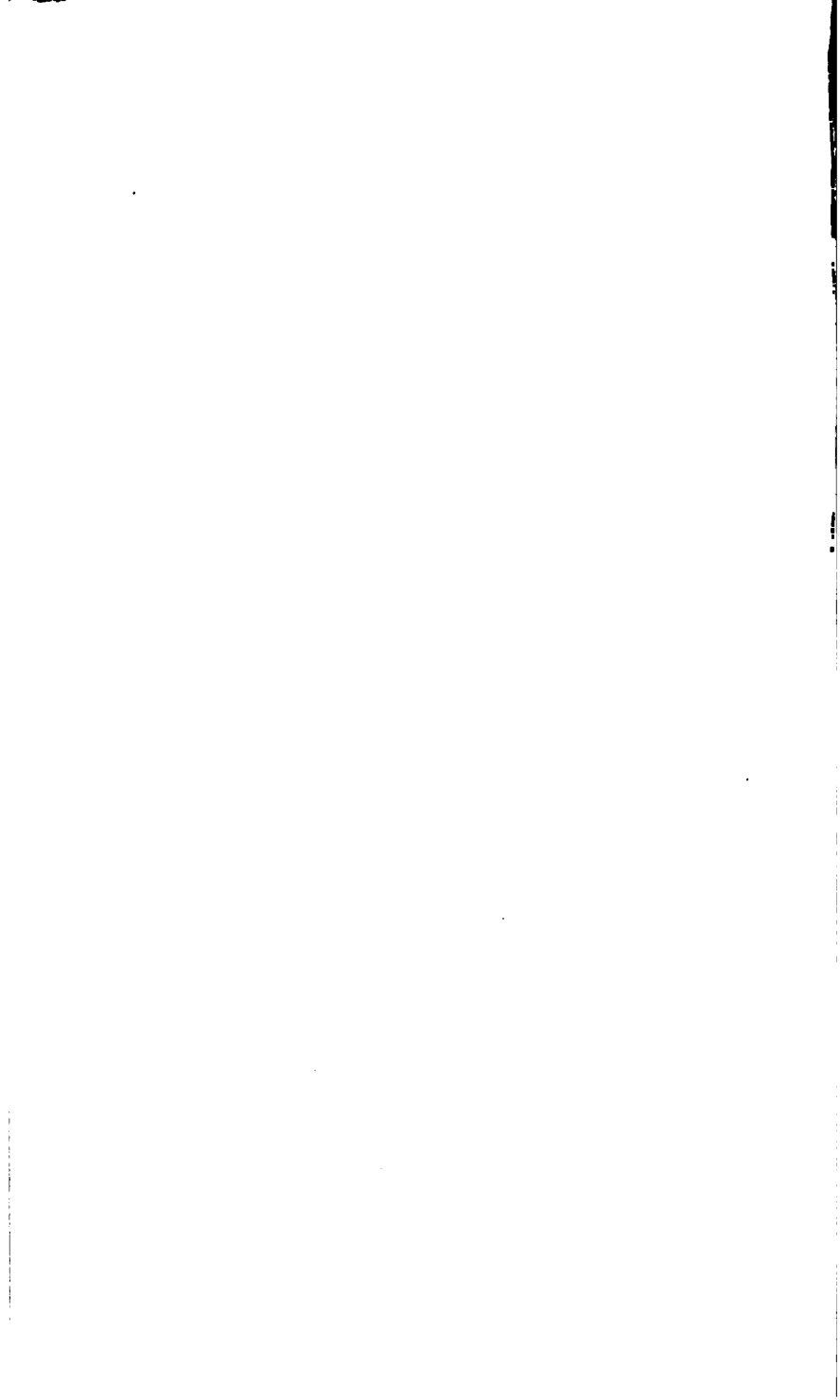






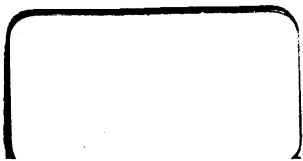
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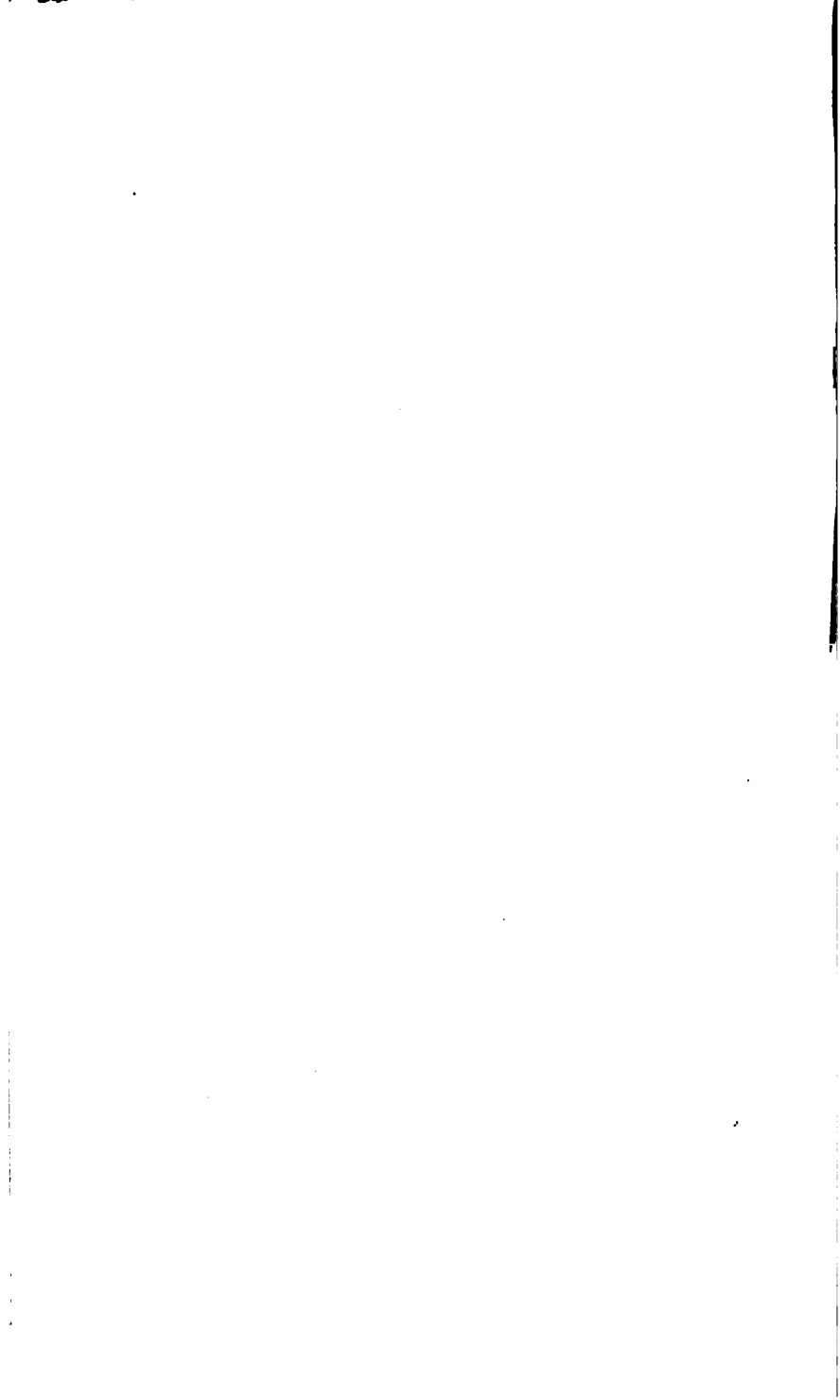






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